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THE
BOOKMAN

SEX IN LITERATURE

By Joseph Collins

IF one should drop into this country from Mars or fly to it from a land in which American papers and magazines are unknown, he might easily believe that we are deluged with pornography and that we are constantly debating what we shall do to be saved, and sporadically trying to make laws that will spare the coming generation contact with lewdness, obscenity, and immorality in literature. He would not be further from the truth if he believed himself in heaven.

There have always been in the world persons who think they are their brothers' keepers, who would like to be, and who strive to be. There have always been others who are convinced they know more about matters that are unknowable — such as destiny and how to prepare for it — than their fellows of equal original endowment and of greater opportunity for enlightenment; and they deem it their mission to make us, by exhortation or legislation, conform to their beliefs. They parade their honesty, praise their sincerity, preach their purity, and pretend their efforts are for the public welfare.

One of their beliefs is that they know good and bad, proper and improper, salutary and pernicious literature, and they are constantly striving for legislation that will force their judgment upon the public. The most naïve reason they give for their activity and ardency is that they want to protect their children. To make the state share the parent's responsibilities may lessen the burdens of parenthood but it is unlikely that it will improve the child's chances.

There is no doubt that some writers set out deliberately to produce pornographic and lubricituous literature, but I am convinced that many books that get a repute for raciness would fail to do so were it not for the publishers who convey by innuendo or misleading statement that the book is what is popularly called "hot stuff".

I could readily name books with no literary merit and no claim to artistry

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that would never have entered the best seller group had it not been for the publisher's cupidity. Speaking from the fulness of a sinner's heart, I say that the question of censorship for books will be solved quickly and readily if publishers cultivate an *esprit de corps* prejudicial to puffing fetid literature.

We all know books that are chock a block with statements and descriptions of bodily functions that most persons do not talk about save to their doctors and nurses. I am always suspicious of the morals of him who professes to be shocked by them. The individual who would be willing to get along without Rabelais would be willing to eat his food without salt — at least he says he would, but I should not trust him when he dined alone.

And then there is the matter of indecency. The indecencies of one generation are the decencies of the next, and vice versa. It is nearly two hundred years since Congreve died, and the thunder of Jeremy Collier's denunciation of his obscenity, immorality, and profanity has scarcely ceased to reverberate; but I read Congreve today and am no more shocked than I am by Arnold Bennett (and I have never heard it hinted that he is a pornographist).

We are bound to go through a period of professional purity and piety in this country. Thus do we cloak the scars received in wooing and winning wealth. Material prosperity engenders the reformatory urge. The rich man convinces himself that his sins will be forgiven him if he saves others, and he thinks he can save them by legislation. But if the time comes when the display of man's normal cravings and his desires is regulated by law, we shall then be intellectual dependents, we shall have lost our mental and physical virility.

Like the poor, such reformers are always with us, and likely they will be till the end of time. There is small hope of curing them so they must be endured.

Let us keep in mind that what is "bad" in one country is not "bad" in another. England sent Henry Vizetelly to jail for three months for publishing a translation of "La Terre", but Zola did not disturb Gallic equanimity until he backed Dreyfus. If an American publisher were to put out a literal translation of "La Mia Vita nel Raggio di Sole" by Guido da Varona, the most widely read Italian novelist of the present day, Mr. Sumner would represent public opinion.

Oftentimes the intervention of the censor in France has hastened recognition of a book's merit, as in the case of "Madame Bovary" and "Mademoiselle de Maupin", or facilitated the sale of a novel without merit such as "La Garçonne".

France has a reputation for producing and enjoying lewd literature. Viewed from a very narrow angle she seems to deserve it. But fundamentally this reputation is not merited and nothing proves it more conclusively than her postwar literature. The vast majority of it is singularly free from display of lust or incitation to lubricity. This is particularly striking in the books that have been submitted in competition, or have obtained one of the many prizes—such as "La Brière" for example.

Literary prizes in France do not necessarily bespeak the standard or the average of the taste of the country, since they are awarded by a jury composed of the thinking *élite* and few

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in number. But there is a new prize which should be an expression of the literary taste of the people. It is called the Prix Floréal. Everyone is invited to participate and send a manuscript. The only restriction imposed on competitors is that their work shall not previously have been published. The reading committee, composed of carefully chosen members, select four books that appear to them most worthy. These are published and sent to the subscribers of "Floréal", who are requested to vote for the book they prefer. The one that receives the greatest number of votes gets the prize, as in our beauty contests. In a general way one thus hears the *vox populi*.

Of the four books that were presented to the reading public at large, none is much concerned with sex; no married man runs away with the wife of his best friend; and no "*secret d'alcôve*" is revealed to an avid and greedy reader.

The first novel, "Le Retour Prodigue de l'Enfant" by René Jeanne, treats humorously of a young man living in a small town surrounded by his involute father, domineering mother, repressed sisters, in the restricted, timorous, and empty atmosphere of a home, typical of thousands of others, which he hates. Raphael escapes to America, whence he returns laden with wealth, ten years later. He finds that his family have not altered any of their narrow ways of living, that they are satisfied to exist, never thinking that the world is full of adventure, and real life. But this existence appeals to him as it never did before, and he is gradually but hopelessly retaken by the bourgeoisie. While this involution is going on in the young man, a corresponding evolution is taking place in the other members of the family. The father, galvanized by the ambition of becoming rich, goes in search of the golden fleece; the mother also has felt the wind of revolt that Raphael had stirred in his father's heart and goes to Paris, "where women of forty five are still young". One of the sisters will seek fulfilment in the city where "there are women who are not married, and yet who are not old maids"; and the younger sister will find a husband, according to her ideal and dream, that will require neither beauty nor fortune, but a loving heart.

Raphael bears the shock of the sudden and unexpected escape of all the members of his family with the fortitude of a contented mind, and returning to his instincts, traditions, and moral dispositions he becomes a peaceful bourgeois and finds fulfilment in the love of his servant.

One readily sees why such a story appeals to thousands whose lot is cast in places not unlike that of Raphael. They make vicarious escape with him, they participate in his adventures and they share his good fortune. They sympathize with his desire to mellow in the physical environment of which in reality he is a part, and they can imagine a worse fate than to have their primitive urges solicitously cared for by a young and pretty woman, especially one trained to serve and habituated to obey. This revolt and flight of Madame and her two daughters may be construed as the first stirrings of "votes for women" in France.

Despite the unlikelihood of the plot and its puerility, "The Prodigal Return of the Child" deserves praise for the adroitness with which it is handled. If it is a first novel it is full of promise; it gives the impression of a labor of joy, without apparent effort but with worthwhile

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results; few authors have the knack of building a philosophical remark around a trivial happening of daily life with such craftsmanship as the author exhibits all through the novel: he has looked beyond the actions of his characters and has studied their mental makeup through their actions, he has given them life and personality — the greyish personality that cloaks most inhabitants of the provinces in France. They are typical of their time and their surroundings, and the contrast between Raphael and his family at all times has been vividly drawn. When he is full of activity and impatience they are buried, seemingly forever, in the monotony of their life; after he returns to the life of his home town his family are seized with the energy and desire of adventures that he has left behind, forever.

"A la Gloire de la Terre" by Gabriel Maurière was the second book chosen by the committee, and needs no comment to describe how typical it is of the display of the Frenchman's dominant passion: the soil. To own a piece of land is the ambition, the desire, the dream, the goal of a large number of the French people who do not live in Paris. Moreover, it would be astounding to know how many families who work in the metropolis are sustained and encouraged in their efforts by the distant oasis, too often a mirage, they create for themselves in the shape of a patch of grass and a red roofed house in the sunlight where they expect to shelter their *vieux os*.

"A la Gloire de la Terre" is almost entirely given up to the earth, its attraction to a depressed and neurasthenic young man who finds in the retired, commonplace, and bourgeoise life of his ancestral domain the happiness and fulfilment that the city has denied him.

French people have two loves. The one they admit is their boundless admiration, respect, and ambition for a well filled *bas de laine* or, in the case of the more modern ones, a long column of figures in a little booklet which represents their savings. The other, of which they are not quite so proud, is love of their soil. They have a number of other little passions and interests, one of which is revealed in "Les Jacques", an historical novel of the peasantry during the Middle Ages written by Fanny Clar. It describes the misery, poverty, injustice, and ill treatment of the inhabitants of France who composed the *roture* and who thought that the Revolution had saved them when it englobed them in the *tiers-état*. (The name alone differed, but they did not know it.) The author of this novel has built a charming and fascinating romance around historical facts and has produced a clean, wholesome novel, redolent of the chivalry of the ages, both attractive and enlightening.

She has given a touch of atmosphere to her book by adopting the same style of writing for the narrative that she uses in the conversation, thus avoiding the disturbing transition that a modern text would have caused. This feat has required not only concentration and care, but a thorough knowledge and mastery of the French language and familiarity with the writings of the Middle Ages. Moreover, the author has felt her subject, she has sympathized with the dominated subjects of the arrogant lords; she is an aggressive militant who in other times would have been a Jeanne Hachette or a Charlotte Corday, not resigned to suffer and endure in silence. What she cannot

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do in actions now she does with her acerb and sharpened pen.

"Les Jacques" is a courageous book, not only for the ideas and reflections that it "broadcasts" and suggests but also because it will not be a popular one, a fact which the author probably knew while she was writing it. It will be appreciated and enjoyed but will not find its place at the *bibliothèque de chevet* of the majority of the reading public.

Little can be said about the fourth novel, "Quand Je M'Eveillerai" by Georges A. Denis—unjudicious choice it seems to me from the point of view of art and literature. It is written in the first person, concerned with the emotions, joys, pleasures, and satisfaction of a simple life in the country shared by a loving and understanding wife and growing child. It is pretentious and affected in style, but is meant to praise and laud the beauty of nature and the happiness of a life spent amid it.

M. Denis has chanted the happiness of his life; he has adorned it with joy, ideal love, *joie de vivre;* he has contrasted his existence before he met *Elle,* a teacher of philosophy, with what it became after their union: all love for nature, simplicity, calm and perfect understanding. He has not forgotten to laud the inevitable fireplace, his pipe, and his table littered with books and papers. He has seen autumn fall on the lake, spring blossom over nature, winter put a white coat over the earth: and he has endeavored, unsuccessfully, to describe them *à la* Jean Cocteau. The volume becomes more interesting after the birth of his son, because he has found the words that describe his joy and has even revealed a sense of humor and wit in his conversations with the baby. Doubtless some will like the book, for it is redolent of sentiment and thought, and it has certain illuminating reflections which would be impressive if the reader did not have to yawn over so many pages devoid of everything save black letters on white paper.

These four novels do not indicate on the part of the French people a taste for literature that would be beyond satisfaction by Harold Bell Wright, Zane Grey, or Robert Chambers; but they tend to prove that the display, dominancy, and divagations of the sex impulse do not constitute the chief topic of discussion by many French fiction writers. The pendulum of taste in fiction apparently swings from one extreme to the other. In France at the present time it seems to be toward the extreme right; if in our country it would seem to be tending toward the left, experience and observation both suggest to me that it will soon swing the other way, and without help of censor or legislator.

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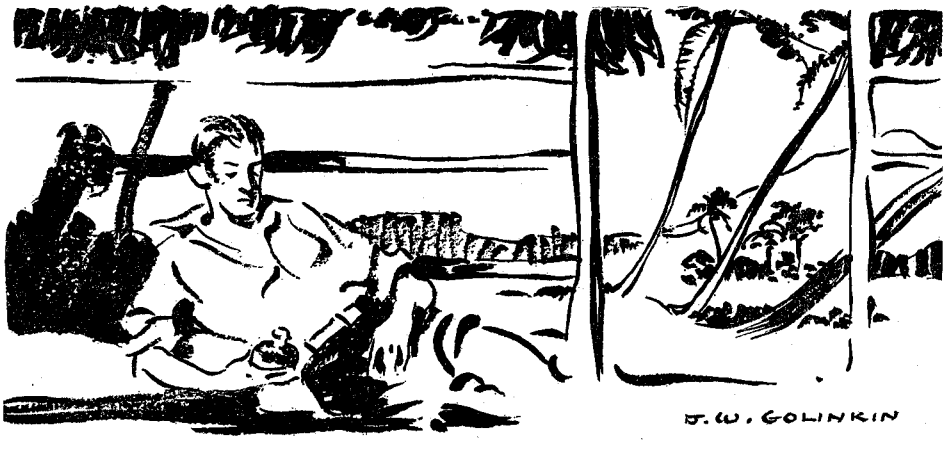

VAUDOUX

By Alan Rinehart

With Sketches by J. W. Golinkin

THE air was fresh as he rolled off the strip of matting and sat up stupidly. Strong native coffee from the tin on the fire kicked him awake; but his head felt to be lined with wool, and his stomach all shriveled up and dead. Where the devil was the gin? Ah! Two great swallows, a heaving, violent nausea; then the warm glow of life running through his veins. His eyes cleared, his nerves relaxed with a sigh; now it had come to his knees so that his legs tingled; and he sank back against the wattles of the hut to dream with a cigarette and to feel the fresh dawn on his face.

The stream bubbled over the rocks of the valley with a sound cooling and wholly delightful, leaping over the rocks where naked native women were already washing their single garment. Their backs were dark and gleaming, the rocks were brown and gleaming, the river splashed high and white into the pools. Yet all the horrors of the world lay in that picture. It was death to drink the water. And the black women—tall, slender, heathen—cost a man his immortal soul. They squatted in ridiculous attitudes, ungraceful, stolid, pounding their one pale garment on the rocks, swaying to the motion of their arms, crooning God knows what. But no Christian should watch them.

A cigarette and ten copper pennies paid the owner of the hut who came leading the horse. The animal had far too many ribs for a horse; still, it was the best Haiti could offer, even if he would have to drag the beast up the mountain. It was a nightmare

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climb, but he could do it if he started before the heat. Any effort that would take him from the loathsome fecundity of this valley. The women all looked at him as he rode off; their eyes had no bottom of intelligence nor any spark in them; they were actuated by some tropism like a vegetable turning to the light.

On he went under the sweet, heavy fragrance of the trees, urging his drugged animal in a passion of revulsion. The air was still fresh above and smelled of sage and scrub and earth; from the top he would see the mighty shoulders of the mountains rolling on forever, vast and still, covered with green cropped hair of vast, quiet jungle. Not a hut, nor any men, nor any naked black women. He beat the horse savagely.

II

Away from the summit drooped the heavy mountains, huge and formless things, puffy and obscene. They billowed down the world in all directions, to lose their bulk at last in the heat haze. The sun glared with a projected malignance and a shriveling fury; sweat dripped from the man's nose and from every pore of his shambling beast, to run finally off the fetlocks and to crystallize immediately in the dust. The man praised a distant God that he was only half conscious. He felt himself fingerless,

"On he went under the sweet, heavy fragrance of the trees"

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amorphous, blind, like a leper or a figure of tar in the sun. The horse died, and died, and died, rhythmically.

Clouds banked high where the world ended at the north, rain clouds, but came no closer. Volcanoes of brown nebula grew where the world ended at the east, but they only wavered in the glare. The trail was pure white and rocky, with a sharp edge of blue darkness where the banana trees rushed up and stopped. In places it had been worn deep by centuries of brown, elastic feet with corny soles. . . . But they have no souls! That was good: souls, soles. Too bad there was nobody to tell it to. With a painful effort he patted the wet horse, then wiped his hand on his trousers.

Lizards scurried off the road and rattled into the brush; swarms of flies, frightened off old manure and putrefaction, sang up and hovered until the danger had passed on; birds slapped the great leaves as they darted for cover. As the sun centred in the sky the day seemed to become darker; but it was only that the eyes protected themselves; the day was harshly bright, coppery and blue, rimmed with red eyelids. The mountain slopes wavered in the heat, so that they irritated him, but never a tree stirred to a breeze.

Suddenly there was the sea, a sharp triangle of blue inlaid in the edge of the world. He would sail out of that bay when he went home; but home brought no picture to his mind. Home was only a place where there was no aching melancholy, no drifting, throbbing agony coming a long way in the night. A drink of gin would certainly taste good now; but it might kill him in the heat. Ah well, after a while, after a while. Stones and rubble crunched and rattled to the steady throb of hoof beats in a dream. . . . After a while, after a while, after a while. . . .

III

The sun exploded at one edge of the world and rocketed flames to the other. A blue cloud of smoke rose and spread over the nothing that was above. Then it receded an infinite distance and hung there, while little fragments of the spattered sun sparkled cheerily, suspended low on long wires.

The wind of the explosion swept up the trailing valleys with a solid front like a wave. Trees rustled, broke from their immobility, in a hiss of languid expectancy. Man and beast came alive, their blood flowed again, thought began to actuate their minds. Night was coming. Night was here.

Tiny fires sprang into existence and twinkled all the way to the tops of the mountains. It was nearly six o'clock, the time when proper men began to drink. There were three gulps of the gin left; then the bottle crashed to satisfying little bits against a stone. A dozen lights appeared a mile or two down the valley; that was home, and a drink . . . and perhaps many things.

The wind died and left the night vast, empty. He hated to plunge into the darkness of the lower slopes; the trees there were cavernous and gloomy, the undergrowth rustling with low, hideous life. Before he knew, he was deep in the valley jungle, urging his horse, peering forward through the mist wraiths and the steam. Vague, troubling, something touched his brain, something exciting, soothing. The horse would not keep pace. The beat in his blood became a sound, irregular, plaintive. The sound became a drum.

Swelling and dying, in no rhythm

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that he knew, in a strange rhythm that some part of him recognized and answered, the slow tattoo made its way under the branches. It danced and crawled, it capered and wept. Grotesque, disproportioned fantoms danced to it in the shadows; the mist wraiths that clung to the trees waved in slow measure. Steadily he approached, until the drum ached in his ears and throbbed in his mind, until he could see a ring of lights and long shadows.

They were dancing again, filthy beasts. He revolted. Already he could smell the sweaty bodies, see the half naked men and women in the bloody cockpit. Each one moved alone, staring straight ahead, each face distorted with frenzy. Outside the circle stood a cask of bad rum; beyond, in the short grass, lay those who had had their fill of drink, women, and the devil; some of them bled a little from cuts they did not know they had received. Laughter and shrieks came from the outer darkness.

He stood on the edge of the circle to watch a moment. Suddenly he found himself laughing at the antics of the dancers, and they laughed and invited him with their hands. A native thrust a cup of rum to his lips, and he drank it. His feet moved in time, and he found he knew the rhythm well. A slim woman of fifteen seized and tore his shirt, and he laughed louder. Somebody pushed him from behind, so that his helmet came off. The girl who had torn his shirt stooped and slapped her knees, grinning at him. He leaped into the ring and stood before her. They began to dance . . .

"The girl slapped her knees, grinning at him"

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CURRENT SHORT STORIES

By Gerald Hewes Carson

THE criticism and practice of fiction writing in America have always constituted two parallel lines of endeavor. And, as is the way with parallel lines, they have never met. Our fiction writers have not suffered from oversubtle analysis, but our critics have. Our critics have experienced no lack of direction, but our writers have. And while each group has had to contend only with its own special malady, the public has suffered from the unhappy symptoms of both.

The professional American critic has adopted only one approach to current literature — that of clinical analysis, with a lot of jargon about materials, and canons, and a monotonous iteration on technique — most of it being flubdub. Now fiction is written — this is but a simple affirmation of fact which has become so trite that it is arresting — to be enjoyed. And if by enjoyment we mean a sort of elevated hedonism — a representation of human life and activity which accomplishes for us an emotional catharsis, or opens wider the window of the universe, then we have not only pleased ourselves, but Aristotle as well. Or if by enjoyment we mean imaginative transplantation to distant areas of our own physical world — or a wholly whimsical and non-existent world — where our fancy may sport without let or hindrance from pedestrian intelligence, then we but satisfy a perennial human need which has been caught and tagged by the literary biologists as "romantic escape".

And so, for whatever of its own reasons, our great nation of magazine readers, assiduous in its own entertainment, has really hewed closer to the line than the professors of the Academy. Yet there is a great common ground where matters of universal import and æsthetics meet, and that is in the play of ideas, involving such an attitude in reading and thinking as is often formidably itemized as "improvement". For this sort of intelligent critical activity we have indubitably an enlarged public, a new American, careless of the gods of technique. He knows what he likes, and is beginning to wonder why he likes it. The critics know about him. He is a familiar of the magazine circulation managers. The book publishers' advertising experts would allude to him in the aggregate in this fashion: that the American people are "sold on the idea of reading".

Like the business of selling insurance or ladies' ready to wear apparel, or the profession of advertising, criticism of current literature is now referred to as a "game". It is to be justified by those who practise it and understood by those who embrace it as neither a pedantic affectation nor a solemn ritual of technical words; but, rather, as an avenue toward increased enjoyment and quickened intelligence.

The most lively and accessible documents on current literature are the current magazines. The most typically American department of their

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imaginative literature is the short story. This article is the first of several discussing the short story as the representative magazines reveal it.

It is true that the American short story has often been a pale and flaccid thing, indigenous though it is. It had to be born. It had to grow up, through all the maladies of childhood, under the chaperonage of editorial minds hampered by divers "sacred cows" in the way of structural and formal requirements. We heard a great deal about "what the public wants", by which was meant what the editors thought the critics thought the public thought it wanted. Today defection in the critical hierarchy, a slight increase in editorial competence, and a really hospitable attitude on the part of the reading public have created conditions whereby the young writer of real promise can get through the barriers to the public and solicit its franchise directly.

The rigid old shibboleths about how a good story *must* be written are disintegrating before the attacks of a new generation of writers who, building upon the best in their dower, boldly declare in their work that a more important criterion is the vital statement of the terms of human life and conflict as the author senses them.

This is the genesis of any good short story. It has guided Ruth Suckow, for instance, in her emergence, and is exemplified currently in her story, "Four Generations" (American Mercury, January). The action of "Four Generations" consists merely of this: a middle western small town photographer journeys out to the farm of an old German family, where, in the hot July sunshine, the family relations gather to see a picture taken of the family's four generations extant. There is humorous jockeying for position. Then a regrouping afterward of the "womenfolks" who, "planted squat in their chairs", relax their plump bodies, and exercise their minds with news of births, marriages, sickness, and scandal. The younger men gather to examine Charlie's new sedan and learn from his banker's lips just what the business outlook is. Grandpa, the mild eyed, bewildered old German peasant ancestor of them all, whispers alone, of his own youth and his children's childhood, and the old, old songs that he knew in the old country.

Miss Suckow has authentically "that higher illumination which teaches to convey a larger sense by simpler symbols". There is promise of the same light in the work of Myrtle Meyer

THE BEST SHORT STORIES

The following ten short stories are selected for special mention as mirroring the best elements in current fiction as it has appeared between November and March. When the stories selected are not by American authors they are, nevertheless, the work of writers so familiar to the American public that they are important influences on our own creative effort.

Lion's Courage. G. B. Mackenzie. ATLANTIC, December.

Four Generations. Ruth Suckow. AMERICAN MERCURY, January.

Painkiller. Marjorie Stoneman Douglas. SMART SET, February.

The Loading. Raymond Knister. MIDLAND, January.

Caught. Sherwood Anderson. AMERICAN MERCURY, February.

Poison. Katherine Mansfield. COLLIER'S, November 24.

Miss Flotsam and Mr. Jetsam. Elisabeth Sanxay Holding. DIAL, November.

The Apple Tree. Konrad Bercovici. GOOD HOUSEKEEPING, December.

The Man Who Kept a Diary. J. C. Squire. CENTURY, December.

Ginger Beer. Wilbur Daniel Steele. PICTORIAL REVIEW, November.

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Eldred and Marjorie Stoneman Douglas. Myrtle Eldred's "Six of Them" (Smart Set, January) is episodic. Clyde, big of body, but "queer" and backward, performs a strange daily task for his father, a street car motorman. "Ketches grasshoppers, he does . . . Six of 'em . . . no more . . . no less." One day Clyde hears his father interrogated in his off hours. He learns that the insects have been used to extract car tickets from the glass fare box. He has helped steal! He cannot "enter in" the Sunday School picture card heaven of golden haired angels with white robes and harps, because of his father's sins, and his own accomplicity.

Miss Eldred has doubtless passed through the normal period of O. Henry imitation, and has not yet entirely freed herself of deference to the machine made ending. Yet "Six of Them" is a striking sketch. Clyde's tortured and obscure mental processes are faithfully represented. The grasp of the colored Sunday School picture cards upon his poor imagination, his pitiful *nostalgie da la croix*, its translation into action, and its dramatic consequences, endow the story with the impact of high truth.

Equally vivid is "Painkiller" (Smart Set, February), Marjorie Stoneman Douglas's story of Lily Bell Thurby, the most famous "nice" girl in North Florida. Lily Bell was famous because she had already taken three hundred and twenty seven bottles of Dr. Parkins's Pleural Painkiller. She was as delicate as the flower which gave her its name, as æthereally beautiful, too, because the Painkiller was compounded largely of alcohol, and Lily Bell's frail body and her fevered imagination had been whipped along by the homeopathic "stingers" almost to the breaking point.

Then one unhappy day a large soft woman from the W. C. T. U. discovered the Demon Rum in the clear fluid from which sprang Lily's distinction. The temperance lady left a poison in Lily Bell's mind more potent than the Painkiller. The countryside still admired Lily, but she knew now that she was vile. She was a damned soul. She must be hurt greatly. She must hurt herself. One night she slipped out into the moonlight in her coarse white nightgown, with a shining Painkiller bottle in her hand. Next morning they found Lily Bell lying in the mud, her poor thin little back terribly excoriated by splinters of the broken glass which she had pressed firmly and ecstatically into her living flesh. They buried her in the cemetery, and around the little mound her lover stood three hundred and ninety five shining bottles of Dr. Parkins's excellent remedy.

Mrs. Douglas has caught and uttered here the mood which voices something of the eternal pathos of this life in which we think and feel so obscurely, and act at such cross purposes, and cling with such desperation to strange hopes and doctrines. One may survey the Time Spirit from another angle in "Miss Flotsam and Mr. Jetsam" (Dial, November) by Elisabeth Sanxay Holding, an author who has long since established an unusual reputation for versatility, and who seems to be equally at home in an atmosphere of youthful intellectuality, trousseaux and teething, or what not. Miss Flotsam and Mr. Jetsam lack the identification of proper names. They are two pieces of human driftwood, whirled together in a metropolitan boarding house. She craved some human notice, abjectly and miserably. "She was anxious enough to please — not as a woman, only as a comrade." In that

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intuitive line Mrs. Holding sums up the degradation of the woman's self esteem. The man regarded her speculatively, aware of her draggled soul and body, at once scornful and pitying.

Like life itself, this story ends inconclusively. An overwhelming sense of the futility of things crippled the faculties and spirit of the woman who clung and the man who withdrew, in weariness rather than snobbishness, relaxing his being, as so large a part of our contemporary world has done, in a disconsolate philosophy and a sense of irresponsibility.

One instrument in the gradual liberation of the American short story from its own deadly ingenuity has been found in the incident, or sketch, which the magazines have been regarding of late with increased favor.

Carl Van Doren, who has exerted critical and editorial influence toward a freer recognition of the sketch's place in fiction, appears himself as a practitioner in a new series of imaginary portraits, "Smith in Search of a Majority" (Century, January), "Matthew Bradford" (Century, February), and "The Comic Patriot" (American Mercury, February), the last named being no more than a dialogue, conveying with a little more personality and picturesqueness than the essay form would allow the opinions of a Van Doren marionette regarding patriotism. However, the best of them is "Smith in Search of a Majority". Smith was ever in quest of "a moral or intellectual neighborhood where he could feel unmistakably at home".

Raymond Knister propounds no such intellectual difficulties in "The Loading" (Midland, January). Mr. Knister is a young Canadian writer with the rare gift of communicating what sense he has of the beauty and import of the things which arouse him. This story of farm life covers the activity of one family for one day, and ends in a tragedy caused indirectly by the father's gruff ill nature. No one who has ever smelled the early morning dew in a country lane, or caught the aroma of summer woods, or watched hot dust swirl across a shimmering barn lot, or listened to farm talk, can escape the *vitality* of this sketch. It answers no question, states no problem, indulges no fashionable satire. It merely communicates a great, compelling sense of experience—a sort of excellence in which our literature has always been deficient.

This form of the story-in-little comes to identify itself quite naturally with inner experience, in which men quietly taste the dregs of disillusionment or frustration or joy, or try within themselves to "break up the tiresome old roof of heaven into new forms", as an earlier American rebel phrased the quest of the spirit. In the hands of Mr. Van Doren it takes the character of mental dissection, for he is attracted by ideas, and the sport they make of human destiny. In the hands of Katherine Mansfield, on the contrary, the sketch takes the form of a tense, sparely drawn emotional situation, for she is interested in emotions and sensibilities. Her story of "The Tiredness of Rosabel" (Collier's, February 9) treats of the romantic revery of a shop girl in which she meets her Prince Charming. The delicacy of spiritual values, tenuous content, and chaste prose which assiduous publicity and criticism have jointly discovered in Katherine Mansfield's work, is present to a characteristic degree. Her "Poison" (Collier's, November 24) is concerned with the emotions of a man living with a

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woman not his wife, and eager, would she consent, to make her his wife. Yet over him hovered a "ghastly" sense of her freedom, of the two husbands in her past, of the other lovers who waited — possibly — until they might share the riches of her love. Why was it, for instance, just when love seemed so beautifully complete to him, that she seemed distraught, pensive, so interested in the postman?

On a far different level is W. F. G. Thacher's "Boy's Grief" (Atlantic, November), expressing the sorrow of a fifteen year old boy when his sweetheart moves to a distant city, and the boy's sense of frustration and unmanliness when he lacks the boldness to bestow upon her the goodby kiss which signifies the mature exercise of his own masculinity.

Hannah Bryant blocks in the main spiritual facts of a whole family's existence in a sketch of similar brevity, "Son and Brother" (Smart Set, December). It is the story of "the fourth and youngest member of the family — the son and brother, and he stood as the symbol of their combined aspirations". He was an ingrate, a literary man and a scalawag, but their idea — the family's idea — of him never wavered, even when he died and cut them off from the royalties. The theme is handled in a smart, clever style with a firm basis in hard, shrewd observation. One would like to see Miss Bryant just as shrewd but not quite so smartly sophisticated.

There has always been in this country, since there has been native fiction at all, a well developed taste for type characters; for the picturesque statement of the general facts of human character in concrete, highly concentrated terms. Among the current magazines the finest story of this sort is unquestionably "Lion's Courage" by G. B. Mackenzie (Atlantic, December). The psychological crux of the story is sound and biting. Eugène Danau, a dapper little French commercial traveler, was, as he knew himself in his own heart, a shrinking little mediocrity. But as a salesman of gentlemen's hats, he had succeeded with almost American thoroughness in putting up a false front.

Came the slump following the war boom. M. Danau's employers closed their doors. Through weary months of unemployment, M. Danau fought his soul's battle with panic. The savings of better years dwindled alarmingly. All the courage of the family now resided in the bosom of his faithful Maria, who daily applied restoratives to his egotism and vanity. Then came the unforgetable day when the "Petit Parisien" carried a notice of the long sought situation.

How M. Danau, at his neatest, burst into M. Barthèlmy's private office an hour later, how he explained his unsolicited entrance, how he puffed nervously at his cigarette while M. Barthèlmy studied him — these matters are all best appreciated in Mr. Mackenzie's swift flowing narrative, which leads to a proposition and the climax. M. Barthèlmy, it appears, is willing to stake the position against M. Danau's wife's *dot* that M. Danau cannot light his cigarette with one match.

> For the space of several seconds M. Danau gazed at him, fascinated; then with a decisive movement forced his own cigarette between dry lips, grasped the box in his left hand, and snatched up a match. The safety-head was quivering on the striking surface: all he wanted was just to flick it along — only — to — flick — it — along — "But you will fail —" It was the sinister voice of M. Barthèlmy.
>
> With a sudden cry the little man was on his feet. Behind him, his chair crashed to the floor: match and box flew wildly toward the fire.

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"Mon dieu! mon dieu! What am I doing? Maria! Maria!"

Seldom is the key to a whole character presented so briefly and by means so legitimate.

The vigor and thrust inherent in "Lion's Courage" are most strikingly apparent if we place beside this story a piece of journeyman work. "Nice Neighbors" (Harper's, December), by Mary S. Watts, is a three quarter length portrait of a "bad" woman trying to become "nice"—and of a familiar *débâcle* when she is discovered. The central character is oversentimentalized. Her love of the birds and trees and chickens is bathetic. The old doctrine crops up again that persons who manifest an aggressive benevolence toward the dumb animals are some way finer than those whose charity starts at home.

Musical themes have usually revealed the American imagination at its worst. Apparently the wells of music and of insincerity rise together! At any rate, the "musical" story has always been handled tearfully and artificially. Now comes Laurence Reamer, a journalist, and hence one more or less beyond the pale of convention, with a different and refreshing attitude, in "A Place with the Stars" (Scribner's, January). It is a story of the systematic exploitation of gullible youth for the maintenance and advertisement of predatory mæstri.

An amusing contribution to genre literature is Olive Tilford Dargan's "Sam" (Atlantic, January), one of a series of "Highland Annals" drawn from her own experiences among the North Carolina mountain folk. Different in emphasis rather than in kind is "The Return of Sledger" by T. S. Stribling (Everybody's, December). Here, within narrow compass, we have presented a whole stratum of life as it is lived in Wayne County, Tennessee. Mr. Stribling's art is still tentative, in spite of the solidity of his reputation. He is both a sober realist and a dashing romantic, hankering for the far, colorful places of the earth. His effort to speak out in both characters makes it difficult for one to know where to have him. Can he have both Wayne County and the Japanese cherry gardens?

When an author starts to work in "local color", he adopts a literary method by which what is characteristic and unique in atmosphere is segregated from what might transpire with equal propriety in Chicopee, London, or Posey County, Indiana. He strives to give his story one merit above all others—distinct *locality*. He may have gathered his own understanding of his locale from personal experience, books, his contemporaries, or his imagination. The first way is peculiar to geniuses; the last to sophomores.

Charles Caldwell Dobie is neither a genius nor a sophomore, but some of the characteristics of both mingle with charming incompatibility in one of his best recent stories, "The Dancing Girl from Pieng-an" (Century, January). The scene is San Francisco's Chinatown, but the *dramatis personæ* are hopelessly occidental in their outbursts of temperament. It is a sheer *tour de force*, a most amusing one, too.

Konrad Bercovici in "The Apple Tree" (Good Housekeeping, December) and "Swallows" (Good Housekeeping, February) is spokesman for the southwest European gipsy, as Sheila Kaye-Smith is for the English gipsy in "The Fear of the Streets" (Woman's Home Companion, January). Both authors celebrate here, as they have done in previous books and magazine stories, the elemental

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simplicity of their material—the age old animosity between agrarian and nomadic peoples; the spiritual struggle ensuing when gipsy Montague loves land holding Capulet; the solidarity of the gipsy folk, whose laws and customs have pertained unchanged from antiquity.

"The Apple Tree" is the best of these stories. It is an admirably conducted narrative, epitomizing a life whose color Mr. Bercovici knows and loves. This personal feeling which Mr. Bercovici has drawn from experience is generalized in "The Apple Tree" with exemplary constructive skill and telling simplicity.

Fannie Hurst writes social documents. "The Spangle that Could Be a Tear" (Bookman, December) is a tract for the Housing Commission. It reads like a specimen of "case work". You recognize the whole family: honest "Big Bill" who drives a truck by day and snores by night; "Little Bill" six years behind his normal growth, with working papers ahead of him. Poor baby Teddy who has a spot on his lung. "Ellie"—budding adolescent beauty, preyed upon by vile men in foul courtyards. (But Ellie is "pure".) Milly, the mother, is the brood mare of the herd. She feels, as Miss Hurst writes, in staccato.

Milly obviously has a part to tear a cat in. Perhaps some day Miss Hurst will write a story and leave that part out. Not until that story is published will many people realize what an excellent writer she is.

Perhaps the greatest obstacle to the advancement of the colored race in America is neither indifference nor race antagonism, but the stubborn preconceptions about the Negro race, largely fictional in their origin, which most Americans entertain. The colored man is either a dummy for the draping of fine sentiments, or the incarnation of how a white man acts on the vaudeville stage when his face is burnt-corked. In this conception, the Negro is invariably portrayed as an Uncle Tom, a Rastus, or an Aunt Jemima.

Among the younger local colorists, Octavus Roy Cohen has appropriated Rastus and exploited him in urban settings. Mr. Cohen's efforts are seconded by John Randolph Hornady in "Obie Breaks the Drought" (McClure's, November). Obie gets mixed up in a trick plot involving general misunderstandings about mineral water and gin in truckload lots. It's amusing and quick firing, which is undoubtedly all it was supposed to be. But it strengthens by one more rehearsal an old and vicious fallacy that the colored man can be understood in terms of crap shooting and rabbits' feet.

The perfection to which the well made story can be brought is admirable, among the lesser arts. It is as artificial as a gas engine, and its parts are as accurately tooled as those of any finely adjusted mechanism. It dominates the magazine field still, so far as quantity is concerned. Its popularity is not far to seek; for if it touches neither the mind nor the heart, yet, like a one man vaudeville act, it can perpetually astonish by its sheer virtuosity. Though we see the stunts coming, the obstacles all prepared in advance, it unfailingly arouses our curiosity to see how the author will haul himself out of his predicament.

Everyone is safe in proposing his own special favorites in this field, for no other reason than that they please him. Impressionism operating within these narrow limits can't go far wrong. For my own part I offer as typical and

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amusing specimens two "Harper's Bazar" stories, "What They Don't Know" by Fannie Heaslip Lea (November) and Leonard Merrick's "The Crime of Olga Jibinsky" (December); George S. Brooks's "A Mislaid Revolution" (McClure's, November), "Chalk Marks on the Gate" by Elizabeth Holloway (Woman's Home Companion, January); and, as best of all for its sly fun with human vanity, "The Man Who Kept a Diary" (Century, December) by J. C. Squire.

As long as the human imagination remains romantic, and in spite of all the Babbitts (Irvings of Harvard, not Georges of Zenith) it will remain so, certain callings will retain an especial pull and tug at the imagination. Most congenial to the imagination of all trades is that of the sailor. Sea stories have not flourished for the last few months—though there is no cause for apprehension on that score! Mention should be made, however, of Arthur Mason's "The Donkeyman's Christmas" (Atlantic, December) which deals with a South Pacific cruise, Christmas—alas how remote it seems now!—being ingeniously intercalated. "On the Malecon" by the veteran William McFee (Harper's, February) is a shore tale narrated, however, by a seaman whose nautical courtship and strange marital adventures make up the substance of the tale. H. M. Tomlinson, the British nature essayist, constructs a skilful little sketch out of "The Day's Run" (Outlook, January 9) in which the death of a sailor is contrasted with the testy discomfiture of the passengers over a night's rolling.

The absence of stories of the frontier marks our arrival at the middle distance, wherein the chronicles of the winning of America interest us but faintly. There is, therefore, a sort of antiquarian interest attaching to Eleanor Mercein Kelly's "The Prior Claim" (McClure's, December), a story of Indian warfare and Indian love when Kentucky was "bloody". The characters and setting are wholly idealized. The red man is unmistakably the "noble savage". So far as subject matter, spirit, and treatment go, "The Prior Claim" could better have been written in 1845 than 1923.

The far places of the earth enjoy a fascination of their own. There, as we think, life resolves itself into a simpler, more vivacious pattern than we can descry in our own homespun existence. One could not say with accuracy that Somerset Maugham is a student of the tropics, any more than one would suggest that his compatriot, Mr. Kipling, was a sober realist. But Mr. Maugham has loved the mysterious East as Ernest Dowson loved his Cynara—"after his fashion". And it is out of that love and a great splash of bright colors that he has written "The Force of Circumstance" (Hearst's, January). It sets forth that young Englishmen who are sent out from the great English public schools as Indian proconsuls and the like almost invariably take unto themselves native women, morganatic wives as it were, until such a time as they are in a position to found their own house with an English girl.

Further evidence of what happens to Anglo-Saxon character in tropical lands is offered in "Shoes" (Harper's, December) by Frances Gilchrist Wood, a story of two American doughboys in the Honduranian jungle, and what it means when a white man discards his shoes. Better than either of these stories, however, is "Ginger Beer" (Pictorial Review, November) by Wilbur Daniel Steele. "This is the story of two men", writes Mr. Steele. It is

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the story of young Hepar who aspired, and Gutterson, who retired—almost; but he couldn't shake off the fascination of the jungle, his job, and ginger beer. The inner truthfulness of the story, plus less of the picture post card atmosphere than usual, mark "Ginger Beer" as distinctive.

The north is equally attractive as the scene for romance, and for much the same reasons. "The Law of the Trap Line" by Barrett Willoughby (American, November) is a revenge story, in which the setting, indeed, is somewhat unusually subordinated to the action. Mr. Willoughby furnishes a cuckold plot, a flaunted husband drawn with real pathos, a hank of hair woman, and a gruesome revenge.

Animal stories constitute a distinct and highly conventionalized type of romance. Invariably the animals are required to personify human traits. "Lynx Lucifer" (Saturday Evening Post, February 9) by Herbert Ravenel Sass and "The Snow Trail" by F. St. Mars (Adventure, February 29) might well have been written, the one about a little boy who was reared by a foster parent to a manhood of somewhat diverse but predominately good qualities; the other about a youth who overcame all obstacles in pursuit of his true love. You recognize the situation, without being told that the lynx was a lynx and the lover an English pine martin. Similar in character, but more heavily loaded with sentiment, are the stories of Emma-Lindsay Squier, a young writer whose work has for a couple of years been a feature of "Good Housekeeping". Consult her "One in Ten Thousand" (Good Housekeeping, November) and "Czar of the High Sierras" (Good Housekeeping, January) for a quick understanding of her range and method.

A more tonic atmosphere than Miss Squier's Sierras afford is to be found in Sherwood Anderson's "Caught" (American Mercury, February). Mr. Anderson writes and lives fiercely, as though by the strength of his arms he would wring from tense experience some inner peace, some answer to the riddle which life eternally entices him to wrestle with. "Caught" is the story of a man who started in to write football stories because of a frustrated ambition to be a football hero himself. Then he wrote more of them because he had to live, and later still more because he had a wife, and a daughter at Vassar, and a position to maintain in the world. But all the time he felt a sharp, inner exigency to grow up as a writer to the maturity he had attained as an individual. His is the Andersonian struggle of the individual against social fetters. Hobson, the football writer, ends ineptly and, like most Anderson heroes, scarcely able to formulate his feeling of rebellion against his bonds—in this case, women. One is ever hoping for Mr. Anderson to grow up to his technical proficiency, and ever just a little bit disappointed. Like Upton Sinclair, though for different reasons, he has the air of the temperamental irreconcilable. And his work, even at its best, exhibits all the limitations of the writer who cannot be dispassionate.

Few contemporary realists can recreate the New York of today with half so deft a touch as the accomplished Mrs. Wharton uses to evoke the life and manners of the middle nineteenth century city. In "False Dawn" (Ladies' Home Journal, November), Mrs. Wharton gets into a favorite vein—the loyalty of a man to an artistic ideal through great spiritual and material vicissitudes. The man is a passionate young aristocrat

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of the eighteen forties, and the ideal is his appreciation, far transcending the cultivated gentleman's dilettante spirit, of the Italian primitives. But even more vividly, the story deals with the declination of his family, the ancient line of Raycies. In this, as in all but the very best of Mrs. Wharton's stories, there is a tendency for the background, which she communicates so vividly, to usurp the place of the "story". You find yourself forgetting—do you not?—the Raycie men and women, but remembering their epergne of pierced silver, their Madeira, and the old house at the corner of Third Avenue and Tenth Street.

On the other hand, when Joseph Hergesheimer delves into Philadelphia's past, he proceeds more narrowly. In "China" (Saturday Evening Post, November 24) and "Silver" (Saturday Evening Post, December 15), the protagonists are—china, and silver. True, he introduces his china and silver around the lay figure of a Philadelphia dealer in antiques; but we know that what Mr. Hergesheimer is really interested in is the unleashing of his appreciation of Dutch tiles, and his erudition regarding early American silverware.

"A Man in the House" (Saturday Evening Post, February 9) by Elsie Singmaster is the tale of how a dog, a shaggy, male, Airedale dog without any tail, came to two Pennsylvania spinsters, won the confidence of the establishment, excepting the cat, and henceforth gave the ladies that sense of inviolability which comes from having "a man in the house". It is as vivid a picture of Pennsylvania manners as Mr. Hergesheimer could wish —but perhaps a different one; for the colors are mostly a soft grey, or a chaste white, and there are no smart, lovely women to enhance the correct loveliness of the old walnut wall cupboard or the lustre ware.

No résumé of manners, however hasty, would be adequate without reference to the current literature of ill manners; by which is always meant, of course, the flapper generation. But when Beatrice Blackmar wrote "The Man Who Knew Women" (Pictorial Review, February) and "Sic Transit Gloria" (Ladies' Home Journal, November) it was with the gayest, the most discreet and tactful probing of the college sophomore mind. Putty Green, the hero of both stories, and his girl, Mary, are perhaps less typical—I do not know this, definitely—than the cocktail crowd. They are certainly more amusing. Miss Blackmar is as whimsical as a squirrel; and as bright. She is a student of the Great American Family, and her handling of its idiom is deft and sly and pert. A shade lower in the scale —of age—comes Edmund Rader in James Mahoney's "It's Not Good Sense" (Ladies' Home Journal, February), the story of how Edmund, aged fourteen, took his first girl to a regular party, and the record of his state of mind before, during, and after the episode. Mr. Mahoney portrays with real insight the extraordinary regimentation of adolescent manners. A slavish conformity to the ideas of conduct and decorum current among the younger generation seems to be the price of survival. Edmund tried to be a rebel—but he failed!

Perhaps there was a good deal of today's literary history symbolized in the spacious evening which Edmund failed so signally to enjoy.

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THE LITERARY SPOTLIGHT

XXVIII: BURTON RASCOE

With a Caricature by William Gropper

THIS has happened so many times, it must be significant. Some sweet creature, sufficiently lacking in sophistication to extract a thrill from meeting celebrities — by which one means nowadays anyone whose name appears in print occasionally — is confronted by a smooth faced, elegantly leggy lad, to whom at sight one would hardly credit more than twenty four summers. His hazel eyes have the wandering alertness of a fox terrier's; his remarkably long nose emphasizes this impression of pouncing inquisitiveness, for it terminates in a hexagonal knob, and the planes reflect light, so that in motion it positively twinkles. And its owner is never still. But a touch of hobbledehoy uncertainty checks his patent eagerness; an evident desire to please and to be liked obviously interferes with a natural impulse toward eloquence. His conversation resembles the outpouring from a full decanter abruptly inverted, a decanter containing a pousse café, whence the components emerge in unblended gurglings. He stammers, never quite finishes a sentence, trails off into vague nonsequiturs. Poising on tiptoe like dawn new lighted on some heaven kissing hill, he bows from the waist, gestures with his hands, straightens his tie; he beams and blushes engagingly. In short, he betrays all the symptoms of being painfully young. And he answers to the name of Burton Rascoe.

Whereupon the lady never fails to exclaim, in accents of astonishment: "But I thought you must be a dignified old gentleman with long white whiskers!"

This a priori concept, though absurd, is not difficult to account for. It is derived from Mr. Rascoe's correctly journalistic habit of chatting in print about Aristotle and Sophocles with the easy familiarity of a contemporary. Realizing instinctively that a dead man cannot furnish news, he proceeds on the assumption that anyone he writes about is still alive; and he gets away with it. The naïve lady has merely reasoned from the wrong end of the syllogism.

The deceptive appearance of juvenescence which Mr. Rascoe presents in his proper person is rather more puzzling. Chronologically, he is thirty one; by the time this achieves publication, maybe he will be thirty two. That isn't so terribly young, and neither is Burton Rascoe, altogether. But then again, he is. His is a case of belated maturity, resulting from extreme precocity. Psychologically he is a sixteenth cousin of Ninetta Crummles, the celebrated Infant Phenomenon, who discovered the fount of eternal youth in a bottle of Hollands, flavored with midnight oil. Mr. Rascoe also sat up of nights in his boyhood, and drank too deeply of the Pierian spring. He has not yet had time to catch up mentally with him-

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Burton Rascoe

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self. Very likely he never will; and when he leaps nimbly into his grave at the age of seventy or eighty, folks will shake their heads and remark upon the pity of such a promising youngster's being cut off in the flower of his years that way.

They will feel so because whatever the intellectual mode of the moment may be, Burton Rascoe will be at least a day in advance of it. His chosen place in the procession is that of running footman, clearing the street for the bandwagon. When at the age of twelve he lent his concentrated and unavailing attention to Kant and Socrates, it was not from any innate desire to imbue himself with the wisdom of the ancients. No, he wanted to be neck and neck with his high school teachers, to gain a few laps on his elders. Chill apprehension seized upon him at the thought that someone might spring the categorical imperative at a dinner party before he knew the correct comeback. Subconsciously he is still embarrassed by that infantile dread.

This is his solitary inhibition. Otherwise, he simply does not know the meaning of timidity or repression. Reverence, respect, and restraint are alien to his nature. As a human being he possesses not even rudimentary principles; and as a critic, he hasn't any æsthetic standards. He has preferences, but they are either purely personal or utilitarian. These are sweeping statements, and require to be elucidated carefully to avoid misunderstanding; but it doesn't matter, they will be misunderstood anyhow. Yet let it be appended hastily that he has something just as good, for all practical purposes, being firmly seized of the Pauline doctrine that while all things are lawful to him, all things are not always expedient. The only drawback to this rule of conduct is that a slight flaw in his taste occasionally leads to errors of judgment in the matter of what is or is not permissible.

For he makes quite terrible gaffs occasionally by overshooting the mark, failing to distinguish between the thing that may be cried in the marketplace and that which must be murmured in confidence, among friends. Upon this colorable evidence, there are those who charge him with malice. They are totally mistaken. He has no enduring grudges, and never bothers to pay off scores in cold blood. When he indulges in controversy, it is for an ulterior motive; and if he is accused of not fighting fair, so was Napoleon, for the same reason, because they aimed at victory and hit at the weakest point. Moreover, Burton Rascoe really does not perceive why any persons should mind what he does to them, since he would not be put out if they did the same to him, and is not when they repay him sevenfold. To say the least, this sounds improbable, but it has been proved. Some years since, a man who stood on the footing of a friend endeavored to inflict upon him a grave injury, with no possible justification. Mr. Rascoe must have been annoyed, but contented himself with avoiding that person thereafter; and lately, when the false friend published a novel, Burton hailed it as a masterpiece. "How could you?" asked a third person who was acquainted with the circumstances. Burton looked surprised, and replied simply that the novel was good.

Thus his lack of a code of ethics is of no material import, being counterbalanced by an equal absence of envy, greed, or rancor. He is amiable to a fault, full of generous enthusiasms, excessively sociable. He gets on with

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the tetchiest of our younger literati in spite of themselves; and there are a lot of violently inflammable egotists among them. One in particular has wasted as much nervous energy trying to pick a quarrel with him as would have sufficed to make an epic. This morbid poetaster writes Burton an insulting letter at least once a month, announcing a complete severance of diplomatic relations — and comes around a few days later to find Burton unruffled and unchanged. The letter likewise remains unanswered. But it is filed away somewhere; it might be valuable years hence.

As a critic, he is a wonderful newspaperman. If he goes down to history at all, it will be as the encourager of new talents. He smells them out not by their artistic fragrance, but by virtue of as keen a nose for news as ever anyone was gifted with. His flair for the author who is going to write something startling is downright uncanny. No one else in the world could have anticipated "Jurgen" by reading "The Cream of the Jest". One is already a classic; the other is just a *jeu d'esprit*. The men who have arrived don't interest Rascoe very much. You can learn all about them in the morgue. What he is looking for is someone who will make fresh copy for tomorrow's paper. If he can get a novel angle on an established author, that is worthwhile; but otherwise, what's the use? Always there must be the perpetual slight novelty, with a timely application. The search for the absolute is no quest for him. If Plato had just given us "The Republic", and Burton Rascoe got a review copy, he would play it up as a proposal for the nationalization of women. For the past year, his favorite word had been "pornography", on account of the censorship fight. But if he had lived during the twilight of the post-Elizabethans, he might have been a Puritan and the discoverer of John Milton. Green apples suit his literary digestion. He can make a full meal of caviar. A hint of the scandalous never comes amiss to him, because newspapers build their circulation largely upon scandal decorously presented. It is the fact or theory which a book embodies rather than its artistic value which engages Mr. Rascoe's attention. He is preoccupied with what he can make of it instead of with what the author has already made of it.

Indeed, his ear for verbal music is slightly defective; and he searches for the unusual word rather than the *mot juste*. Neither euphony nor precision appeals to him so much as oddity. It hardly matters if he doesn't know just what the word means, so long as it is not hackneyed he will employ it. His sense of humor is unripe, tending toward crudity. But he is brilliant, intuitive, quick to perceive an author's intention, and hence prone to give as much credit to a promise as to a definite performance. The future owes him a considerable debt — which he is entirely competent to collect.

For this blushing youth knows where he wants to go and how to get there. When he came to New York he left an established reputation in Chicago. (The phrasing is exact.) Most Chicagoans believe that New York is supercilious, whereas it is simply provincial. Burton's disregard of tradition kept him from this error. He had absorbed the lesson of the frontier; that it does not matter where you came from, nor what you have done; present performance is the important thing. Oklahoma is his native state, which originated the "sooner",

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the fellow who hopped in ahead of time and settled down without waiting on formality. That was his procedure in New York. He perceived that the quickest way to get in was to take introductory conventionalities for granted. Placidly appropriating an unoccupied chair among the self elect, he began talking to them with affable arrogance. The arrogance was calculated, for the purpose of provoking rejoinder. He "drew" the inner circle; to one a compliment, to another a thrust, whichever would best serve the turn; and they bit. By talking back to him, they tacitly admitted him.

Calmly looking over their various means of keeping in the public eye, he adapted anything he could use. His Bookman's Daybook has been called the most striking journalistic innovation of the past decade. So it is, but as Shakespeare helped himself to Holinshed and Plutarch, Burton Rascoe took and transmogrified "Kenelm Digby's" Literary Lobby and F. P. A.'s Pepysian parody to make his bookman's holiday, just as a point of departure. He had both the nerve and the ability to go beyond his preceptors. The Daybook required a lot of courage to begin, and even more talent to continue, to walk the invisible chalk line between dulness and vulgarity. Personal revelations are of absorbing interest, when not insufferably boresome. Betwixt Scylla and Charybdis Burton has steered his frail bark deftly, only occasionally grazing the proprieties, for he has a constitutional list to the Left.

The original quality in the Daybook is that it reports the intellectual news of the day; here is the newspaperman to the fore, though he happens to be "covering" literature. The superficial gossip is mere window dressing. Mr. Rascoe is intent primarily upon giving a reflection of contemporary thought. And he goes after it like a reporter; gets it from the source. Probably a good deal of it is inaccurate in detail, colored by his own theories and predispositions; but essentially it is truthful. His victims sometimes object that they never said what he imputes to them. Maybe not, but the substance of the conversation is generally characteristic; he conveys the speaker's personality, though it be by means of an imaginary dialogue. It is what they were leading up to, or might have said; it sounds like them. And one must bear in mind that few of us can recall exactly what we did say on a given occasion.

Mr. Rascoe himself does not talk so well as he listens — when compelled to. But he is not hard to compel. He never seems to get an idea fully formulated, *viva voce*, because another steps on its heels. At whiles he acts in the same erratic and disconnected manner. At a party, along toward the middle of the evening, he springs from girl to girl as a chamois from crag to crag. Seizing one by the hand with glad enthusiasm, he trails her limply protesting form in pursuit of another. He emulates the military hero in "Penguin Island" who strode unhampered on his triumphant career, with a countess floating scarfwise from his neck and a duchess clinging fondly to his knees. Accused of Don Juanistic proclivities, Mr. Rascoe asseverated fervently: "You wrong me, you wrong me; I just like to be with nice women" — and therewith bounded away in full cry after a newly discerned bevy of girls, leaving his character to speak for itself. Women appreciate his appreciation; they pour their sorrows into his confiding ear, while his wife looks on with a min-

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gling of amusement, exasperation, and resignation.

A sketch which included no glimpse of him in his parental and domestic rôle would be sadly incomplete. Seeing him *en famille,* one realizes that he is fortune's pet. His wife, Hazel, so frequently mentioned in the Daybook, is a compendium of the graces, grave and sprightly, with a wistful childlike face and a remarkable fund of plain common sense. She looks like a butterfly and serves as his ballast. He would have run himself to death in pursuit of excitement long ago if she hadn't seen to it that he got all he needed at home. Almost one suspects that she selected their children with sagacious prevision of his moral requirements. Children are inevitably a responsibility; but his are a burden that any man would be glad to shoulder. There are two, a boy and a girl, as good as gold and eminently soothing to the proprietary paternal eye. When they grow up they are going to find father a good deal of a problem, on account of his insouciant habits and incorrigible youthfulness; but they have the stamina to grapple with it. After all, they will decide, he is their father, though he does not seem to realize it; and they will do their duty in respect of holding him to the straight and narrow path. They are bound to disapprove of him, but they will not be able to help loving him. His wife, on being diplomatically invited to enumerate his faults, replied after long cogitation: "Well, he snores, grinds his teeth, and moans in his sleep; but otherwise he is perfect!"

His family counts enormously in his life. If he writes for posterity, it is in the most direct sense; he does it for his wife and children. The artistic impulse comes in a very bad second. The most likely sign of genius about him is that he works solely for the reward. Nothing but an imminent deadline and bread and butter considerations can spur him to write. He would rather just live. But with those incentives, he is highly industrious and prolific. He will accept any commission that offers, and fill it too; but his copy is not turned in until the eleventh hour and fifty ninth minute. For years he has been preparing a collection of essays for the press, and it is not yet finished, because the returns on such a volume are problematical. If a check were assuredly forthcoming on delivery of the manuscript, it would have been ready long ago. In the only leisure period he has enjoyed since the age of eight or thereabouts, he wrote the rough draft of a novel, but it may never be brought to completion, because fiction is seldom remunerative and he was obliged to get back on a salaried job.

His obvious mannerisms are mostly misleading. The exigencies of the daily grind make him appear brusque at times; but he is never really out of temper. As intimated above, his bad breaks are intentional, not slips of the pen but mistakes. A streak of harmless vanity keeps him tolerably modest; he worries over the fact that his eyebrows do not extend the full width of his lofty brow, that his nose is not of a classical straightness, that he is not five feet ten in height instead of an inch and a half below that standard. His self confidence is the outcome of a tolerably accurate estimate of his genuine capacities, and a rooted determination to make the most of them. His biggest achievement to date is the immortalizing of a member of the American Academy. But unless his sudden and violent demise follows some similar exploit, he will be heard from further.

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MR. MELVILLE'S "MOBY DICK"

By Carl Van Doren

Mr. Van Doren's article is the fourth of a series in which various of our younger critics will attempt to express the reactions which well known books of an earlier generation would arouse in them, were those classics newly published today.

THIS astounding romance is neither so sane as "Typee" and "Omoo" nor so mad as "Mardi", but occupies a fruitful ground between those two extremes of Herman Melville's art. It bears, indeed, the marks of a hand which moves as if it had learned its tricks during the early nineteenth century. Echoes of Carlyle roar through its rhythms; the wings of transcendentalism wheel over it, shutting out at times the secular sun. The narrative marches under a load of erudition, concerning whales and whalers, which recalls those simpler days when fiction and history had not yet agreed upon the division of labor with which each is now satisfied. Mr. Melville obviously lacks the realist's conviction that the bare facts of human life are in themselves eloquent, and so permits himself to lean a great deal upon certain misty symbols to give his meaning its rich colors and ominous shadows. For any but those among its readers who have an expert's interest in the technique of whale hunting or who take a connoisseur's delight in the manipulation of witty and poetical prose, the book is sure to seem too long, perhaps by a third. There must be plain men who would find the voyage of the story shorter than the volume. And yet, touched by certain conventions of its generation as it is, "Moby Dick" presents a face which is almost as timeless as an ocean or a heath. If there is a greater sea tale in modern literature, that tale has not yet been published.

Even to mention the word "tale" in connection with this history is to call to mind the hollow distance between it and the ordinary novel of the sea. Mr. Melville is never merely brisk nor jaunty, never merely racy nor knowing, never merely hilarious nor sentimental. From the first sentence he writes always in something of the grand style. "Call me Ishmael", says his narrator in the first sentence, thus cutting himself off from the world of the customary. Bored with the dry land, he goes to New Bedford, takes up with a cannibal harpooner, ships with him upon the Quaker owned "Pequod" for three years in the South Seas, learns first that Captain Ahab has lost his leg in the jaws of a whale, then that he is set upon avenging himself for his loss, and finally that he is a madman, sworn to destroy the great white Moby Dick, though in so doing he has to sink his ship with all its motley population, so vast and fixed has his will to vengeance become. By the time Ishmael has begun to comprehend the situation they are deep in the magical Pacific, where Ahab gradually compels his crew to share some of his frenzy. They harry the sea for the whale, but Moby Dick

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has an essence of immortality in him, the terrible immortality of a fiend, and in the end he demolishes the ship. Only Ishmael survives to bring back the epic log of the voyage. And if the theme is thus larger than the theme of the ordinary nautical romance, it becomes still larger in the handling. This last cruise of the "Pequod" is more than a routine expedition for the profits to be got by murdering whales. It is a cosmic issue. With so much madness at the helm, the hunt is bound to end in catastrophe. Tragedy broods over the ship and Ahab from the hour they sail. But with what mighty deliberateness it closes its fist upon them, these storm pitched hunters of the deep! How cannily it waits till it has the mother of all the oceans for its stage! With what a swift stroke it finally closes the account of the venturers who have dared to challenge the insolent supremacy of the devils and the gods!

Mr. Melville is perhaps partly intent on mystifying when he says he fears that ignorant landsmen may scout at the story "as a monstrous fable, or still worse and more detestable, a hideous and intolerable allegory". It is true that gossip along the seaboard reports an actual white whale, called Mocha Dick according to Mr. J. N. Reynolds, which long laughed at all its pursuers and became the object of many hatreds before it was finally captured off the coast of Chile. But much has happened to this theme in passing through Mr. Melville's imagination. Suppose, it has occurred to that imagination, there were some victim of the monster who had vowed to have revenge. He would realize that his chances for meeting Moby Dick on the broad Pacific must be very few, and if the meeting were long delayed he might well brood upon his purpose till it had acquired a stupendous significance for him. So with the captain of the "Pequod": "All that most maddens and torments; all that stirs up the lees of things; all truth with malice in it; all that cracks the sinews and cakes the brain; all the subtle demonisms of life and thought; all evil, to crazy Ahab, were visibly personified and made practically assailable in Moby Dick." The man is in the grip of a passion so single and inveterate that his mind cannot admit the possibility of giving up or turning aside. Absolute master of his crew, out of sight of all civil restraints, opposed by nothing except the magnitude of his task and the craft of his antagonist, Ahab becomes more truly a monster than Moby Dick. He is vengeance in the flesh, a seeker without bounds to his desire. Whatever Mr. Melville may say about his mad hero, Ahab has a hundred symbolical or allegorical implications.

Having a hundred of them, Ahab is likely, of course, to find interpreters who will each insist that he has the one true key. This authority on the riddle will maintain that the romance is an allegory of the proud soul riding to its doom; this, that it is an allegory of the speculative soul following the problem of evil to its fatal lair; this, that it is an allegory of the violated soul going to the end of the earth for justice; this, that it is an allegory of the perverse soul leaving its natural companions to catch a glimpse of some satanic grail; this, that it is an allegory of the infatuated soul skirting continents and crossing oceans for the sake of union with an object which it equally loves and hates. Since so many interpretations seem each of them applicable, probably no one of them deserves to be finally accepted. The

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matter is too immense to be summed up in any simple formula. Different dispositions will find themselves reflected in the many facets of the drama. Its variety is one measure of its greatness, as is also that profound vitality which will make it long capable of being wrangled over by rival critics who can no more come to agreement than they can about the meaning of experience itself.

This much, however, is clear and unmistakable: Ahab is at once a kind of Faust and a kind of Lucifer, brought up in Nantucket and fed from his youth on Calvinistic theology. Accustomed to the dangers of his occupation, he might naturally have been expected to regard the loss of his leg as a mere accident for which nothing could be blamed. Accustomed to the doctrine of predestination, he might as naturally have been expected to regard his loss as the will of God, working mysteriously yet righteously. But Ahab cannot be reconciled by either of the orthodoxies in which he has been bred. He must know the cause of his misfortune and must pay back blow for blow. He is in rebellion against whatever god or whatever godless chaos has wrought this havoc upon him, against whatever it is that Moby Dick is or represents. "That inscrutable thing is chiefly what I hate; and be the white whale agent, or be the white whale principal, I will wreak that hate upon him. Talk not to me of blasphemy, man; I'd strike the sun if it insulted me." "The prophecy was that I should be dismembered; and — Aye! I lost this leg. I now prophesy that I will dismember my dismemberer. Now, then, be the prophet and the fulfiller one. That's more than ye, ye great gods, ever were." No wonder that, with so blazing a titan for its hero, the story grows sulphurous toward the close, hinting that the gods, disturbed upon both their upper and their nether thrones, invoked thunder, ocean, and the hugest of the beasts of creation to put down this impious man who had dared to crowd so close upon their secrets. No wonder that almost a race seems to have perished when the "Pequod" goes down, a skyhawk nailed to her mast, into the level waters, and Moby Dick, unharmed and unperturbed, glides away to other business. Only such a fate could be worthy of such a hero.

Mr. Melville's romance, however, is by no means entirely theological. It is packed with history. Better than any other novel it reproduces the works and days of the whalers in that time, now so incredibly forgotten, when they went out from Nantucket in fleets to the most distant and most enormous of the American frontiers. New Bedford and the hard little island are here described with as lively a pen as Mr. Melville employed in his account of the cannibals of "Typee": the inns, the docks, the ships, the people of all degrees. He is even more detailed when Ishmael has got to sea, in the whaler's true element. The whole literature of whaling, no less than all its devices, seems to be at his finger's ends. He classifies whales like a cetologist; he stands by with anatomical explanations while they are being cut up and turned to human use; he abounds in anecdotes of old adventure. Obviously with a set purpose, Mr. Melville has brought together in the "Pequod" the various tribes of men who went whaling: not only Yankees, but an Indian, a Negro, a cannibal from the South Seas, a Dutchman, a Frenchman, an Icelander, a Maltese, a Sicilian, a Chinese, a Manxman, a Lascar, a Tahitian, a

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Portuguese, a Dane, an Englishman, a Spaniard, an Irishman, a mysterious boat crew of Asiatics; and each tribe or type is accurately distinguished. Nor is the "Pequod", for all its errand is so lonely, lost in the Pacific. Its path crosses that of many another vessel, and they hail one another and exchange the news of the ocean till there has been woven of their crossings and exchanges a solid fabric of knowledge concerning all that goes on there. The pageant is immense, but it is not dim.

The excessive length of "Moby Dick" is due to the abundance of its erudition. A more artful writer could have produced the same air of threatening postponement in the catastrophe without ransacking so many encyclopædias. A more artful writer, too, would have known better than to fall so often into blank verse in his elevated passages. Nevertheless, there is evidence of a powerful control of the materials of the book in the fact that it is as well constructed as it is. And the language, spirited, flexible, pungent, sardonic, exuberant, is superb.

The Nantucketer, he alone resides and riots on the sea; he alone, in Bible language, goes down to it in ships; to and fro ploughing it as his own special plantation. *There* is his home; *there* lies his business, which a Noah's flood would not interrupt, though it overwhelmed all the millions in China. He lives on the sea, as prairie cocks in the prairie; he hides among the waves, he climbs them as chamois hunters climb the Alps. For years he knows not the land; so that when he comes to it at last, it smells like another world, more strangely than the moon would to an Earthsman. With the landless gull, that at sunset folds her wings and is rocked to sleep between billows; so at nightfall, the Nantucketer, out of sight of land, furls his sails, and lays him to rest, while under his very pillow rush herds of walruses and whales.

Mr. Melville can be intense or insinuating, archaic or vernacular, downwright or poetical; he is never commonplace. No one of his senses seems ever to grow dull. He writes with the energy of a man who is tirelessly alert, even in his most learned chapters nipping the heels of his exposition so that it caracoles like a thoroughbred. Even his mannerisms, except possibly his irritating blank verse, have something about them which is obstinately distinctive. Though he may have limited his audience for "Moby Dick" by his mannerisms, he almost certainly has written a book which, despite them and partly by reason of them, will awaken half frantic enthusiams in numerous bosoms for many years to come.

GOD'S ACRE

By Jeannette Marks

WHEN the trees blow
Do the dead lie quiet?
Hear nor sound nor sigh,
Sleep, nor ever turn?
When the winds cry
Do the dead know?

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CHAPTERS FROM UNWRITTEN AUTOBIOGRAPHIES

II

FROM CHARLESTON TO HAVANA, 1865

By Mary Cadwalader Jones

AFTER we had seen the flag raised again over Fort Sumter my father was anxious to get back to the north; but if it was not easy to enter the Southern States in 1865, it was still harder to leave them. However, we had learned by this time to sit down helplessly on the military and naval authorities, confident of their omnipotence, nor did they ever fail us. Admiral Dahlgren said that nothing could be simpler; he was about to send one of the blockaders over to Cuba on Easter Sunday, to bring back fruit for the squadron, and we could go in her, and take the regular mail steamer from Havana to New York. We spent Saturday in bidding goodby to the officers who had been so untiringly kind to us, one of whom had been the hero of one of the bravest deeds of the war.

In 1862 Lieutenant George Morris was in temporary command of the sloop of war "Cumberland" in Hampton Roads, when suddenly the Confederate ram "Merrimac" appeared and struck the "Cumberland" so fiercely with her iron beak amidships that the sloop heeled over at once, the water pouring into her gashed side. Morris could not have been blamed for surrendering, but that did not occur to him; "he fought his ship while a plank floated, fired his last broadside in sinking, and went down with his flag flying at the peak" — where, by the way, it remained flying over the shallow roadstead for several years, marking the grave of the "Cumberland". Morris went down in her, and was picked up almost exhausted.

When I knew him he was in command of a gunboat, and one of the most genial and generous of men, but other officers could always get a rise out of him by saying as he came near, "Here comes 'Brave Morris of the Cumberland' ", the first line of one of the many verses written at the time of his exploit. The adjective might have pleased him three years earlier, but in 1865 it drove him almost to frenzy. He insisted on making me the handsome present of half a monumental fruit cake which he had just received from home, as he feared I might find rather short commons on board any of the squadron, and I gratefully accepted his offering. Even allowing for the magnifying power of memory it was a noble cake, black and moist and rich, and I gloated over it in anticipation.

At nine o'clock on Easter Sunday morning, April 16, we met Admiral Dahlgren at the dock where his barge was waiting, our slender luggage was put in the bow (except my precious cake, which I insisted on holding in

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my lap), and off we started into the harbor, heading for the irregular grey line of the men of war. As we drew near one of them we could see by the commotion on board that our visit was unexpected; pipes blew shrilly and men hurried to and fro as on we swept in proper dignity, for in those days an admiral's barge, with its fourteen oars striking in the water in exact time, was far more imposing than the present businesslike but fussy motor boat.

Although I was pretty well used to the autocracy of the navy, it occurred to me to ask whether the Captain who was to take us to Havana knew that we were coming with him. The Admiral answered, "That will be all right", just as we drew alongside the "Mary Sanford", and he went up the gangway followed by me with my cake. After the exchange of salutes the Admiral said quietly, "Captain Kempton, you will take Mr. Rawle and his daughter to Havana, and give them every hospitality that your ship affords", and poor Captain Kempton, redder than any beet, gasped out, "I'm afraid, Sir, that I shall not be able to make them very comfortable", looking as if a heavy tile had fallen on his head. But the Admiral only said, "I'm sure that will be all right", as he had said to me, and in a moment more he was down the gangway and the barge was majestically drawing away from the ship, while we stood over our little pile of luggage, crushed with the consciousness that we were embarrassing guests. I could have jumped overboard with joy. Captain Kempton recovered himself first, and insisted on our going below to take possession of our quarters. There I had another pang, for he took me straight into his own cabin, where his wife's photograph and his brushes and shirt collars were peacefully at home. No remonstrances could move him, nor the first officer, who turned out of his cabin for my father; omnipotence had ordered that the ship was to show us all hospitality, and we had to submit. When I came on deck again, somewhat soothed by a large slice of cake, we were already well out of the harbor and plodding along quietly. The "Mary Sanford" was named after the wife of one of the officers of the Adams Express Company, for which she had been built. When the war broke out she was given to, or bought by, the government, and had been for a long time on blockading duty, so that her engines were tired and her bottom foul, while her provisions were principally salt pork and hard tack, with some canned meats and vegetables put up two years before, which all tasted pretty much alike. Why we did not die of them I don't know, but fortunately most germs and microbes had not been discovered. Late in the afternoon of that first day I was half dozing on deck when I felt a sudden jar and some thumps, and we stopped. After a time Captain Kempton told us that two blades of the propeller had broken off short, and that we must be prepared to limp along slowly, as they could not be refitted in Charleston if we put back. There was nothing for it but good humor and patience; my father found an officer who could play chess, and I battened on fruit cake, with the natural result that I have never been able to look at one since.

On Tuesday or Wednesday morning we saw smoke in the sky far behind, and in a few hours a big steamship overhauled us almost as though we had been at anchor. She was the mail steamer which had left New York on the Saturday before. When she drew nearer we saw that her flag was at half mast, so we signaled to each

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other, we put out a boat and so did she, we both stopped while the boats met, and a parcel passed from her boat to ours.

When it reached us we found it was a couple of New York newspapers of Saturday, April 15, with the news of Lincoln's assassination.

One of the big headings between the black stripes read, "AWFUL EVENT. PRESIDENT LINCOLN SHOT BY AN ASSASSIN", and the other sheet said, "SEWARD AND SON ARE ALSO DEAD", which was the report on that Saturday morning. My father and the officers crowded together and read the newspapers over each other's shoulders; I remember that we looked toward the other steamer with an instinctive longing for companionship, but she was already far ahead and soon her smoke was a dim blur and we were alone in the empty sea. For the next day or two we did nothing but wonder and discuss possibilities, feeling all the time as helpless as one does in a nightmare. To add to our perplexity, the papers, although chiefly filled with accounts of the crime, and narratives of those who had witnessed it, also alluded to happenings of which we knew nothing. Our last news had been of the occupation of Richmond on April 3; of Lee's last gallant battles, and of his surrender at Appomattox on April 9 we were ignorant, and we had to piece out as best we could allusions to what everyone in the north knew. Two years at sea, in a service which was dull and uneventful most of the time, had not encouraged optimism among the officers, and as I look back on those days they seem to have been solid gloom.

But no impersonal sorrow can blacken the sky for long when the sun is shining in it, and by the time the newspapers had been passed from hand to hand until they were literally rags we had begun to wonder how much longer our leisurely voyage would last, and to get some amusement out of it in the meantime. For some reason we had the crew of another blockader on board, besides our own, and I spent many hours on the forward deck, learning to tie knots, to sew with a palm, and to know the different ropes, for sail and steam were not then so absolutely divorced as they are now and we helped ourselves by canvas whenever we could. I think the crews liked the company of a young girl who was frankly interested in whatever they could show her, and I can honestly say that I have never been in better mannered company. Sometimes when they were in the full swing of a chanty they would suddenly mumble a verse, or evidently jump it, if I came near, but I never heard a word which could shock the most Victorian propriety. One of the chanties, about Ronzo, was a favorite, for it had a lilting tune, and gave a chance for improvisation. It began:

Ronzo was a tailor,
Ronzo, boys, Ronzo,
But now he is a sailor,
Ronzo, boys, Ronzo,

and went on to take Ronzo "round the Horn, where we showed him many a storm", and "round the Cape, where he with fear did shake", and to every place to which a rhyme, good or bad, could possibly be tagged, ending in a fine full burst:

But now he is a sailor,
Ronzo, boys, Ronzo,
And not a damned old tailor,
Ronzo, boys, Ronzo.

(They tried to sing "darned" on my account, but often forgot.)

Day after day we crept down along the coast of Florida, in sight of land,

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which meant long stretches of sand and palmetto scrub. One morning when I came on deck a certain point seemed familiar; I thought I had seen its particular bristling tuft of trees when I went below the evening before; so I asked one of the officers whether I were right. He answered wearily that I was; the Gulf Stream was setting around the point about as many knots as we could steam against it, and we had not much more than held our own all night. But at last, on Sunday morning, a long week after leaving Charleston, we sighted the shore line of Cuba, which looked, as I remember it, rather like a comb with some of the teeth broken out. And just then a coincidence happened which has made me indulgent to the most improbable of them in fiction.

In order to admit guests into Fort Sumter on the day of the flag raising, steep flights of temporary steps had been put up against the walls of the Fort. As we went up one set of them a dearly loved opera glass which my father had carelessly put into an outside pocket fell from it and disappeared in the water. Its case floated, and one of the crew of the barge seized it and offered it to my father, but he refused to take it since the glass was gone. While we were looking at the Cuban coast line he was lamenting his loss, as he had done every day, whereupon an officer remarked that one of the crew forward had a glass which he would surely be glad to lend. As soon as it was in my father's hands he exclaimed that it was his very own Voigtländer, to which my comment, made with the calm superiority of youth, was "What nonsense!" But since my father insisted that he could not be mistaken, that he recognized its every dent and scratch, we sent for the sailor, to learn how he came by it. The steps at the Fort, we found out, had been put up by gangs of men from the different blockaders, and other gangs had taken them down on the following afternoon. It happened then to be low tide. As a boat from the "Mary Sanford" was about to push off, one of her crew saw something shining caught in the rocks, and he reached down and fished up the glass, which had lodged between them when the tide was high the day before. We had never heard of the "Mary Sanford" until we were dumped aboard of her, and in a few hours we left her and never saw her or the sailor again. (It is characteristic of human nature that my father said pensively, as he fondled his recovered treasure, "I wish now I hadn't refused to take the case!")

Entering the harbor of Havana is like going into the neck of a demijohn; as it widened we saw for the first time the Confederate flag flying on ex-blockade runners openly exultant over the murder of Lincoln.

In 1865 Havana was a delight to anyone in love with the picturesque and not unduly disturbed by smells. We went to the Hotel d'Ingliterra, and at once turned ourselves out into the streets. My first purchase was a Spanish phrase book, and as I found among the opening sentences "I can buy it cheaper somewhere else", I thought it might be useful to begin by learning that by heart. Except for a very few polyglot hotel servants, and an occasional shopkeeper who spoke a strange lingo which he thought was English, one heard nothing but Spanish, for it was late in the season and too warm for visiting strangers. We went once to a restaurant on the strength of its having a French waiter, but it must have been his day out; all the things to eat had Spanish

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names, and were so hot with peppers that we felt like sitting with our mouths open. Somehow we worked our way through the menu until it was time for dessert, when I ordered a *"pato de Florida"* because it had a nice pastry sound. I thought the waiter looked surprised, and when it came it was a fishy little duck. Then again we were advised to try the sea baths, so we went to an establishment where I tried to explain that we each wanted one. After waiting some time we were shown into a small room in which two ordinary bathtubs were sociably steaming side by side. When we finally managed to get to the real *baños del mar*, which have probably been condemned long ago as unhygienic, we thought them heavenly. Each bath was a long narrow room, with stone walls and a door which one could lock. On the harbor end there was no wall, but iron bars through which the water came rushing yet which were close enough to keep out "even small sharks", as we were reassuringly told.

In the late afternoon everyone turned out to drive in the Paseo. At first it looked queer to see the gas lamps lighted in broad day, but there was practically no twilight, and before the long string of equipages turned back to the town it was velvety night. The characteristic local vehicle was the volante: it had two very large wheels set far back, a light body hung on leather straps, and long curved shafts, between which one horse was harnessed while another, or sometimes a mule, was attached alongside by traces, and ridden by a postilion, usually a negro. Only two people could sit in the body, and it seemed the proper thing for a lady's skirts to billow out on either side, since the wheels did not interfere with her finery. Old fashioned families had superb volantes, the harness heavy with silver, the postilion covered with gold lace, but these were beginning to be superseded by barouches and victorias, in which, however, the ladies were always in full evening dress. One day I saw a gay young blood who had evidently brought back from London or Paris a very high dog cart; a tiny "tiger" sat back to back with him, and the lady by his side shone in bright green satin, low necked and short sleeved, and wore a magnificent emerald necklace. When it grew dark the carriages blocked the streets around the fashionable cafés of the Louvre and the Dominica; the ladies who sat in them talked to their admirers and ate *dolces* — I remember *granizadas* as a delectable slush of fruit juice and what looked like sweetened snow.

At the Tacon Theatre the sight from the stalls was exceedingly pretty, because the fronts of the boxes were of gilt lattice, through which the bright frocks of the women showed from waist to foot; the ladies looked like tropical birds in gold cages.

Since we lacked letters of introduction we knew no one, so in the evenings we used to wander about the streets, enjoying the home life of the townspeople, displayed for us with ingenuous frankness. The principal living rooms were almost on a level with the street, and the large windows were unglazed, with wide bars to prevent entry or exit. Each room was brightly lighted by a chandelier hung from the ceiling; down the middle of the floor ran a wide strip of carpet, and on either side of it was a row of American rocking chairs, set at right angles with the street, so that one looked up between them. The father and mother, he often very thin and she always

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very fat, sat at the top of the row, and the family and their visitors in the other chairs, the women on one side, the men on the other, all rocking vigorously, eating sweetmeats, and talking at the top of their voices. Admiring comments by passers by on the beauty of the ladies — and some of the very young girls were lovely — were not discouraged, and occasionally a friend in the street would hold a conversation through the window bars.

It was all amusing and simple and exotic, and we were sorry when we had to go, but the mail steamer and the annual visit of Yellow Jack both came all too soon, and in a few days we were back in the chilly northern spring, and part of a more self conscious community.

TO A FALCON

By William Rose Benét

WHOSE eyes have pierced that tragic East
Where a miraculous sun ascends,
Whose flight has hovered above that feast
The lion makes, with lesser friends,

Whose scimitar wings through darkness break,
Through icy cold and gold of dawn
To slant across a lilied lake
And sheathe upon a lilac lawn,—

Proud flier, I can read aright
The bleak, keen brightness in your eyes,
Though cruel wings hunt down the height,
Curved talons track the cruel skies.

Buzzard and vulture linger low
To tear man's heart, but higher, higher
Into a zenith light you go
Unguessed of kite or lammergeier;

And here, upon my shoulder set,
Unhooded, freer than aught that flies,
You bring the heavens' star spangled net
Trailed from your beak to blind my eyes;

So only since your pride is mine,
Your love of all things wild and fleet,
With golden and with crimson twine
I tie these bells about your feet.

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JEFFERY FARNOL'S GESTES

By Grant Overton

A GESTE is a great exploit or an heroic achievement; the thing that has today pretty generally dwindled to a gesture. But although the fiction of Jeffery Farnol is full of gestures — of ladies who cry, "La!" and of ladies who swoon; of gentlemen who draw swords as naturally as they draw breath, or even more so — the succession of his work is a series of gestes. For one point, he followed his bent in the teeth of literary fashion and scored, at the outset, an enormous popular success. For another point, he kept his head when success was upon him. Although a favorite scene in his stories is one full of lightning fence, swifter guard, and dexterous ripost, the true portrait of the author is decidedly different.

It shows him in the patient and laborious attitudes of his own Black George, in the toil the young Farnol was himself committed to for a period in his youth, the heavy work of the forge and the foundry, the slow heating to malleability and the shape hammered out before cooling. After "The Broad Highway" had captured the fancy of England and America, in an incautious moment Farnol the smith, Farnol the patient artificer, contracted to furnish his next tale as a serial in an American magazine. The editor blithely began publication with only part of the manuscript in hand. Dissatisfied with his work, the author tore up ten chapters. For several months he worked under pressure. In the end he kept the editor supplied.

The experience did not lead him into the misconception that his smithy was a Ford factory. Nor has the fact that he can write one kind of tale ever led him to suppose that he ought to succeed with another variety; he followed "The Definite Object" with "Our Admirable Betty". It is surprising to reflect that he made his hit by reviving a species of romance when romance of that species, and of pretty nearly every species, was justly considered to have breathed its last; but it is vastly more surprising to realize that he has continued to succeed by the same tactics.

Our story begins with two little boys in their nightshirts listening furtively but eagerly outside the door of a room in which their father was reading aloud to their mother, whose eyes were on her needle. The book was "The Count of Monte Cristo". The name of the older boy — he was eight — was John Jeffery Farnol; of the younger, who was to fall in the Boer War, Ewart Farnol. The family had removed from Birmingham, where Jeffery was born, to Lee, in Kent. The reading proceeded until a sneeze betrayed the boys. But after that they were admitted for an extra hour to the evening readings. The senior Farnol read excellently, varying his voice to suit the characters. He made the stories live, for Jeffery at least. From Cooper, Scott, Dickens, Dumas, Thackeray, and Stevenson heard at home, Jeffery became a schoolboy who

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invented tales to entertain his fellows; in particular he started a story which he carried on for three months, winding it up with the close of the term.

When he had finished school he wanted to become a writer, but since there was not money to send him to one of the universities his father thought the ambition foolish. At seventeen therefore the boy was set to work in Birmingham with a firm of engineers and brassfounders. Manual labor at the forge was varied by a great deal of fighting with fists. He spent the lunch hour either telling stories to the other men, "stories from the classics", as he says, "vividly touched up, no doubt, or making a rough drawing of some scowling diffident sitter." As he sat drawing one noon, a man of the crowd looking over his shoulder remarked: "Ah, that's all very well, but drawing ain't manliness." A test of manliness, inquiry developed, was the feat of a chap who had climbed up the inside of the big chimney. Farnol laid five shillings to half a crown that he could duplicate the deed. Says one account: "The chimney towered up, one hundred and twenty feet of blackness, choked with the soot of four years and with insecure stanchions, several of them broken." He fastened his handkerchief at the top for all to see; it is easy to believe that the worst of the thing was the climb down with soot tumbling in his eyes. The men refused to pay their bets, he had to fight one of them, though sick and giddy, and was beaten. But a climax was near at hand. Farnol kept a notebook in which he was forever jotting down ideas and impressions. The foreman most reasonably objected to these interruptions of work. There were blows. Leaving the foreman "reclining in a daze against an anvil" — the words aren't Farnol's — the last Farnol saw of the place was his handkerchief fluttering from the chimney top.

"No good for work, always writing." How singularly right the foreman's verdict had been, some years were required to prove. For a time Farnol stayed at home and wrote stories, poems, what not. A few stories got printed. His father was unimpressed, except by the unanimity of relatives in declaring that he was encouraging Jeffery to grow into an idle fellow. It seemed as if something might be constructed from his son's natural aptitude for drawing. Jeffery began the study of line and figure drawing under Loudon at the Westminster Art School. He found everybody else at the school so much more clever that he became discouraged.

"I think I'll write."

"You can't write", said his father. "You've not had a university education."

He went into his father's business, but as he continued to write stories, and as some of them continued to get accepted, this arrangement was a failure. At this time his favorite recreation was cycling. "All the highroads and byroads of Kent, Surrey and Sussex became familiar to me. I wheeled between the flowery hedgerows and quenched my thirst at the wayside taverns. It was then, while watching villagers wending their way to church, that I first saw the Ancient. There he was, tall hat, smock-frock, shrewd, wrinkled face, and gnarled hands grasping his knobbly staff, just as I have described him in 'The Broad Highway'. And that was the first inception of the book, though it was not until several years afterward that it came to be written." Black George

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was fashioned out of his own time spent at the Birmingham forge.

Farnol wasn't yet twenty one when he married Blanche Hawley, daughter of F. Hughson Hawley, a New York artist. The pair set out for America. The bride of seventeen had been sent to England on a visit. It was hoped that Mr. Hawley would take the news well. It was also hoped that Jeffery might sell stories more successfully in the United States. He had a negligible amount of money. The seven, and more than seven, lean years were beginning.

Mr. Hawley received them well. In an interview a year ago* Mr. Farnol, recalling the New York period, is quoted as saying:

I hadn't a cent in the world. My wife had paid for the wedding ring and the honeymoon, and it seemed to me that after that it was up to me to do something. It has been said that her father remained adamant when we arrived, but that isn't true. I'm expecting a knock on the bean from him when he reads that. On the contrary, I found him a delightful old cove, and we were forgiven.

After that I went to work, living alone in a room at Thirty-eighth Street and Tenth Avenue. One night, about 3 o'clock in the morning, I came across a man down by the river whose face was all covered with blood.

"What's the matter?" I asked him.

"I'm dying, kid, I'm dying!" he told me.

I took him home and fixed him up. It turned out that he was the leader of a notorious gang. I've never known a finer chap than he. I've found out in this life that if you scratch deep enough you'll always find true worth.

About a week after that night he came around and took me to a notorious saloon. He took me into the back room and introduced me to the bunch. Several of them have gone to the chair since, but they were good fellows.† I've gone into that saloon without a nickel in my pocket, and looking it. I've had one of the gang say to me: "Stony up against it, kid? Will a fiver help?" and before I could know what happened the gang would have taken up a collection of $25 and given it to me.

My wife was living with her family at that time, but often she would come to bring me baskets with chicken and all sorts of delightful little delicacies. The neighborhood was a terrible one in those days, and I was afraid at first to have her come there. I told some of the boys about it. They told me never to worry again. They arranged that an unseen bodyguard should follow her from the street car and escort her to my room and back again when she was ready to leave. . . . She believed in me even then when it meant more to me than anything in the world. People don't know it, but I am naturally a timid man. She gave me confidence in myself, and with it came the ability to succeed.

The room at Thirty-eighth Street and Tenth Avenue was a studio, "dismal, rat-haunted", where a job as a painter of theatrical scenery compelled him to spend a great many of his nights and days. In intervals of scene painting he began "The Broad Highway". "I met O. Henry several times in the offices of 'Ainslee's Magazine'. I think it was Will Irwin who introduced us. O. Henry was unusually taciturn for an American, and I — well, I am an Englishman. So though we saw each other frequently, never more than 'How d'ye do' passed between us."

The pleasantest recollections I have of those old days was the time I spent in dabbling in painting and theatricals at the old Astor Theatre. One day a down-and-out young man got past the doorkeeper and strolled on the stage. "I've got a fortune here in my pocket", he said. "We all have that", I replied.

The young fellow said he had been a cub reporter in Chicago, but now he was hungry and looking for a job. Finally he got the attention of the producer at the theatre. He pulled out a manuscript and began reading. The producer at first paid no attention, but gradually became more and more interested. When the first act had been read the producer said, "All right, I'll take it." The starving dramatist was

*The New York *Evening Telegram*, October 21, 1923.

†Identified by a correspondent of the Boston *Herald* as Dago Frank, Lefty Louie, Whitey Lewis, Gyp the Blood — figures in the Becker case.

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Eugene Walter and the manuscript was that of "Paid in Full".*

Farnol succeeded in selling a number of short stories and had some work as an illustrator. He wrote two light romances, "My Lady Caprice" and "The Money Moon", which magazines bought. For two years he put all his spare time on "The Broad Highway", the history of which is among the curiosities of book publishing.

The completed manuscript of "The Broad Highway" was submitted to the Century Company and Charles Scribner's Sons in New York, both of whom failed to come to terms and returned it shortly. It was then submitted to Dodd, Mead and Company, who indicated a conditional acceptance and asked the author to come in and discuss possible changes. The firm's readers offered their suggestions and Farnol took notes. The principal result was that he cut 20,000 words out of the book, which still remained of 200,000 word length, or twice the length of the usual "full length" novel. The alterations were not enough to give the publisher the necessary confidence; the date was 1907, the year of the money panic; and the manuscript was finally returned to Farnol with a definite declination. The reasons were sound: there had been a bad slump in Wall Street, the book was formidably long, the author was unknown, the interest of the tale might be almost wholly for English readers.

What was fundamentally the trouble in 1907 was not to be stated with vigor until 1914, when Frank Swinnerton's critique of Stevenson was to appear with such concluding sentences as these: "Stevenson . . . created a school which has brought romance to be the sweepings of an old costume-chest. . . . If romance rests upon no better base than this, if romance is to be conventional in a double sense, if it springs not from a personal vision of life, but is only a tedious virtuosity, a pretence, a conscious toy, romance as an art is dead. And if it is dead, Stevenson killed it." Such, even in 1907, was in various quarters uneasily felt to be the fact. In 1907, it is true, George Meredith was spending his declining years in poetry, and Thomas Hardy was at work on "The Dynasts"; but "The Way of All Flesh" had been published four years earlier, Shaw's plays were being staged, the dead George Gissing was at last coming into attention, Mr. Galsworthy had just given us "The Man of Property", Mr. Wells was brewing "Tono-Bungay", and Mr. Bennett was at work on "The Old Wives' Tale". If the lid of the costume chest was still raised, it had every appearance of being propped most insecurely. All cogent and immediate reasons aside, the publisher of books had every psychological and intuitive cause for doubting the appeal of a volume of 500 closely printed pages, much of it in dialect and all of it concerned with Kentish scenes of a hundred years earlier.

To return to "The Broad Highway": An actor with whom the author had become acquainted at the Astor Theatre was about to play an engagement in Boston, and offered to show the manuscript to friends in the office of Little, Brown and Company. Farnol waited for some word in vain; after several months he learned that the actor had returned to New York, and sought him out. The actor had visited the publishing house but had com-

*Interview in the Boston *Herald*, October 18, 1923.

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pletely forgotten the manuscript. . . . It was taken from the bottom of his trunk, where it had lain all the while, and Farnol was minded first to sell it, with all rights, for $500. Mr. Hawley said Farnol would do no such thing, "if I have to buy it myself." Farnol's next impulse was to burn the cumbersome bundle. He finally gave it to his wife, and Mrs. Farnol sent it to her husband's mother in England. Shirley Byron Jevons, at that time editor of "The Sportsman", was the next to see it. He took it to the publishing house of Sampson Low, Marston and Company, introducing it with: "Here is another 'Lorna Doone' " —Blackmore's novel having been the firm's greatest fiction success. The publishing house accepted the book and had drawn an agreement with Mr. Jevons as Mr. Farnol's agent when the author appeared unexpectedly. In fact Farnol, discouraged by his fortunes in America, had simply got on the boat with his wife and little daughter. A new agreement was drawn with him direct, and signed.

"The Broad Highway", accepted in England, was offered by the English publisher in America. Little, Brown and Company were the acceptors, learning for the first time of the actor's delinquency a few years earlier. The book was published on both sides of the ocean and sprang into instant success. In the midst of the smother of applause, appeals, money, and golden prospects Mr. Farnol had a moment. He ejaculated: "Just think! I've lost four years of my life!"

Two years elapsed after the publication of "The Broad Highway" before the appearance of "The Amateur Gentleman"; and except for the publication of a piece of work written before "The Broad Highway" ("The Honourable Mr. Tawnish") and his effort to help in the war ("Great Britain at War"), he has had only nine books brought out in the dozen years since he raised the curtain. And of these one, "The Geste of Duke Jocelyn", a romance in prose, blank verse, and rhyme, is a novelty written for his daughter, Gillian, published because what had entertained one girl might very conceivably entertain others. Mr. Farnol's method of keeping his head on his shoulders has been to practise industry without becoming industrial. Although homesick at first on his return to England, he settled in Kent, at Lee, with a den at the top of the house where he could work from midnight to breakfast. Old English books lined two walls of this refuge; another wall was given up to a collection of old pistols and sabres; and on the desk there usually lay a dictionary of slang dated 1812. More recently the Farnols have lived at the seashore at Brighton, but the winters are generally spent at Ospedaletti, which is on the Italian Riviera.

Except for a short visit to report for the London "Daily Mail" the fight between Jack Dempsey and Georges Carpentier in 1921, Mr. Farnol had not revisited America until autumn, 1923. At that time visitors met a shortish man, anything but a figure of romance, whose outstanding trait was his genuine friendliness, "a friendliness which is not an affectation with which he tries to put strangers at their ease, but an actual part of him."* To see him rehearse and enact, rather than merely outline, his next novel was an exceptional experience, for at such times he suits his voice to his characters and displays a considerable range of dramatic skill.

*Interview by John Anderson in the New York *Evening Post*, October 23, 1923.

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Interviewers developed evidences of a struggle in the romancer's mind between the type of woman he writes about and the types more usual today; however, chivalry, or perhaps the romantic vision, enabled him to come through the ordeal by newsprint without dishonor.

In an article appearing at the height of Mr. Farnol's first success, Henry Keats wrote:

"The Broad Highway" has seemed to the critics to invite comparison with so many different masters of the English novel—George Borrow, Blackmore, Le Sage, Dickens, Stevenson, Thackeray, to mention a few—that I asked him about his "foster-father". Mr. Farnol smiled. "I would not know my own literary parent if I met him out here in the broad highway of Kent", he exclaimed. Judging from his subsequent confessions, the creator of Peter Vibart and Charmian is under greater indebtedness to Laurence Sterne than to any of the immortals named above. And that was owing to the friend of his "boyish ambitions", to whom "The Broad Highway" is dedicated. Mr. Shirley Byron Jevons was the first, some years since, to call Mr. Farnol's attention to the supreme difficulty of writing a book dealing with the abstract, citing, as a rare example of success in that line, Sterne's "Tristram Shandy". A copy of that unusual book was speedily procured by Mr. Farnol, and he recalls as though an impression of yesterday the manner in which he was "enthralled" by its pages. "Then", he adds, "I went on to 'The Spectator' and 'The Tatler', the reading of which showed me how great is the loss of those who are unacquainted with the Queen Anne essayists."

Certain books by Mr. Farnol—"The Honourable Mr. Tawnish", "Great Britain at War", and "The Geste of Duke Jocelyn", each outside the true succession of his work—have been mentioned. A descriptive note on his principal novels may perhaps fittingly conclude this account.

"The Broad Highway" (1911) has probably already been sufficiently described, since it must be familiar to many who may read these lines. "The Amateur Gentleman" (1913) has for hero Barnabas, son of a retired and famous boxing champion of England. Having come into a legacy, the young man resolves to journey to London to become a gentleman. The period is that of the Prince Regent. There is a rapid series of adventures on the journey; Barnabas meets Cleone, the heroine; he acquires a valet and establishes himself with the quality; and the fashionable world loses him, for he returns home again. "Beltane the Smith" (1915) concerns a golden haired giant and matchless swordsman whose odyssey of adventure is lived in a much earlier England. "The Definite Object" (1917) is the story of a young New Yorker whose wealth has taken from him all incentive to action. For want of a definite object in life he is toying with the thought of suicide when he surprises a youthful burglar in the act of entering his rooms. Then, as "Mr. Geoffrey", he takes up lodgings with the housebreaker in the old Hell's Kitchen district of New York—which was the region between Thirty-fourth and Forty-second Streets and west of Sixth Avenue. "Our Admirable Betty" (1918) is a return to the dimension of "The Broad Highway" and "The Amateur Gentleman". "Black Bartlemy's Treasure" (1920) and "Martin Conisby's Vengeance" (1921) are tales of piracy and the Spanish Main, the second novel completing the first. "Peregrine's Progress" (1922) more closely than any other book approximates the scenes and action of "The Broad Highway"; it is laid in Kent, it relates a boy's adventurings on the road and by the roadside, and it reintroduces the Tinker. "Sir John Dering" (1923) keeps to the same period. A skilled swordsman who has

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incurred the enmity of the Lady Herminia Barrasdaile is forced to fight duel after duel which she has instigated in the hope that he will meet his death.

The dictum of Clement K. Shorter, editor of "The Sphere", best fits the case of this friendly writer and honest workman: "The great reading public of any age will not be bullied into reading the authors who have reached the dignity of classics. The writer who can catch some element of the spirit of the 'masters' and modernize it is destined to win the favor of the crowd." The love of a fairy tale, delight in action, pleasure in such characterizations as Black George, the Tinker, and the Ancient—picturesque; in outline broadly simple—have been potent. Stevenson was dead; the good as well as the bad of his legacy had been swallowed up in a flood wherein the sound could no longer be distinguished from the meretricious; what we loosely call realism was in the ascendant. Years were to go by before "realism" could be seen to be the necessary clearing of paths to an exploration of the romantic impulse more intelligent as well as more subtle. In the meantime an age old thirst found these drafts to quench itself. On the porch of the Bull at Sissinghurst the readers of Mr. Farnol have sat for many an afternoon, washing the dust from their throats with a pleasant ale and enjoying the surprising procession of knights, scholars, gipsies, gallants, pirates, and simple maids and ladies of fashion which passed before them, coming from and returning to a world without end, truly.

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MAKING THE MOST OF YOUR GENIUS

By Mary Austin

V: GENIUS AND AUTOSUGGESTION

EDITOR'S NOTE: *We have usually considered genius a gift of the gods, bestowed upon only a chosen few. Mrs. Austin, after years of devoted study, emphatically asserts that genius can be acquired. In a series of articles, the first four of which appeared in* THE BOOKMAN *for November, January, February, and March, she attempts to analyze genius and talent and to point the way both for recognizing them and for utilizing them in life and art.*

IN approaching the problem of releasing the native capacities of the deep-self by autosuggestion, I am taking it for granted that you are more or less familiar with the current phraseology of the subject and with what has been accomplished by this method in the way of stabilizing the vegetative system and establishing a flow of health. But such success as the autosuggestionists have had is possible only because the whole health sustaining complex works by the genius process; that is, by the nonconscious rehearsal of the experience gained in its agelong evolution, in the business of digesting food, aerating the blood, and reproducing its kind.

In precisely the same manner that the vegetative consciousness accepts from the immediate-self stimulus and direction as to the manner in which it shall perform its well learned office, so the genius self will work out the structure of a novel or a Brooklyn Bridge by the aid of its ancestral experience in these things. Any type of consciousness which is subjective will respond to suggestion, and not, so far as we know, to any other method. Whatever orthodox science has admitted as true of the suggestibility of one department of submerged consciousness, it is prepared to admit of all the others. To say that a flow of genius may be released and stabilized by autosuggestion is as commonplace as to say that nervous indigestion can be cured by that method.

Orthodox science, however, does not accept for autosuggestion all that some of its practitioners, especially those who mix religious doctrines with their methods, claim for it. The advantages that may be secured by autosuggestion, though amazing, are strictly conditioned by the nature of the deep-self. M. Coué went so far as to say that a mother could determine the sex of her expected child by thinking about it. But suppose she should change her mind half way! Fortunately we are not subject to any such hazard. So far, no evidence has been produced to show that autosuggestion can be made to work against the life pattern. If you have been naturally and habitually writing like Laura Jean Libbey, do not hope to find a formula by the repetition of which you will immediately, henceforth, write like Henry James.

Before undertaking to say just what autosuggestion *will* do for genius and for talent, or to enumerate ways in

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which it can be most conveniently managed, it is necessary to make certain discriminations that, so far, both the autosuggestioni ts and the psychoanalysts have failed to make. The first has to do with differences in the way the non-conscious areas of the deep-self and of the immediate-self work.

Because of this failure of discrimination I have deliberately avoided the use of the terms "*sub*conscious" and "*un*conscious" in describing the genius process. In general, both of them are used interchangeably to describe anything that goes on outside the individual area of acute awareness, but strictly speaking there is no such thing as *the* subconsciousness, regarded as a distinct limb or organ of the mind. All that we can speak confidently of having, are differentiated areas of awareness grouped about the spotlight of self consciousness.

Perhaps all that we positively know about the spotlight is that nothing that once impinges upon it is ever lost, but may sometime or other, by the proper method, be recalled out of contiguous, practically limitless storage areas. When we say a man has a good memory, what we really mean is that he has good command over his storage facilities. Psychoanalysis has demonstrated how items of experience lost in the non-conscious fringes of the immediate-self can seriously disturb its equilibrium, but most of the explanations and many of the conclusions of psychoanalysis have been rejected by orthodox science for the reason that neither Freud nor Jung nor Adler has discriminated between the natures of the non-conscious activities of the immediate-self, and the activities of the deep-self. In so far as we may use terms of place in respect to the psyche, the deep-self lies directly under the immediate-self, conterminous with it. Strictly speaking, it is the only department of consciousness which could be called *sub*. Arising by infinite accretions of experience out of some unimagined source of life, it wears the flower of the immediate-self at the tip of its agelong stalk. At their point of attachment glows the circle of self consciousness. Beyond this centre extends the tenuous florescence of the immediate-self, emotions, impressions, ideas, that perhaps are shed in death and, floating like dried petals still redolent of the perfume of personality, brush the fringes of other minds still fast to their stalks, creating the illusion of after death communication.

The worst of the best figure of speech is that it tends to create the impression that the whole ground has been covered. There are probably other types of consciousness besides the *sub*, which is of the deep-self, and the *un*, which is the only available term for the outer fringe of the immediate-self. There may be, for instance, a *super*consciousness which makes use of neither the senses nor the ancestral experience. These several types of consciousness, being differently constituted, have various modes of procedure, and deserve descriptive names that should by no means be regarded as interchangeable. Hereafter I shall use *sub*conscious as descriptive of the operations of the deep-self, and *un*conscious for whatever in the immediate-self is not at the moment in the spotlight.

The content of the immediate-self consists almost wholly of objective experience, of which the mode is ratiocination. The content of the deep-self is inherited experience, stripped of its objectivity, reduced to potentialities, and its mode is wholly subjective. It

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would follow, therefore, that the best and almost the only method of modifying the immediate-self, which is the seat of talent, would be to inform and criticize and train it by reasonable methods. And the one possible way of dealing with the deep-self, which is the source of genius, would be by suggestion, since you cannot by any manner of means reason with the subconscious. Unless this distinction of procedure in the two non-conscious areas, requiring a difference of method, is understood and accepted, it will not be possible for me to explain why I am convinced that whatever genius lies in a man's inheritance can be released for the use of his immediate-self by suggestion.

There are three generally recognized methods of affecting the psyche by suggestion: environmental suggestion, which may include the deliberate suggestiveness of parents and teachers, as well as the whole social complex to which one is born; autosuggestion, which may be deliberate, and not necessarily conscious; and M. Coué's "induced autosuggestion", by which he means the autoacceptance of the physician's suggestion, framed to meet the patient's desires. I should also class under this description the unformulized sort of suggestion you lay yourself open to when you go to hear "The Tales of Hoffmann" in order to reawaken your appreciation for romantic passion, or what I go after, walking in the Penitente Trail above Taos. But none of these methods of suggestion will work in any department of consciousness *except to the degree that the selected area is suggestible.*

This means that autosuggestion will work perfectly in the deep-self, which is wholly subjective. It will work much less perfectly, if at all, in the immediate-self. Talents, therefore, and what we call the intellectual faculties, being born into the pattern of the immediate-self, can be affected scarcely at all, either in their scope or quality, by formulas. It seems best to put this bluntly and have it over with, because there is a great deal of religio-scientific slush going about, to the effect that you can get and be anything if you first find the right formula. But I can explain this better by relating one of the experiments by which I discovered for myself that the immediate-self is only slightly suggestible, and that talent cannot be changed, though it can occasionally be circumvented.

To make my experiment conclusive, I began with the talent which in me registers lowest, the talent for music. I am not absolutely tone deaf, but I have difficulty in telling, of two notes on the piano, which one is higher than the other, and cannot reproduce the note last struck with my voice. I had the usual small town course of music lessons when a girl, and being extremely intelligent, with a good memory, I learned to play a number of "pieces". If, however, I forgot the proper note in any bar, I had no idea what it ought to have been, and could play nothing whatever by ear. I can recognize a number of simple melodies, such as "America" and "How Firm a Foundation", but not more complicated compositions no matter how many times I have heard them, with one exception. I have never quite figured out what this exception has to do with the experiment, but it must mean something, possibly in connection with my highly developed sense of rhythm and my taste for the higher mathematics. I can recognize Wagner almost any time I hear him. Living as I did so long in the desert, I heard no Wagner until I was almost thirty

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five — victrolas had not been invented then. Yet the first time I heard the "Overture" of "Siegfried" played in the intervals of a Woman's Club convention, I recognized it. To this day I can recognize more themes out of the Rhinegold Cycle, which I never heard but once, than from any other source except the Methodist Hymnbook.

This inability to learn and remember and record musical themes was a great handicap to my Indian studies, so I resolved to overcome it if such a thing were possible. I used autosuggestion and another method which will be described later, and I worked along two lines. The first was to try by every possible method to enlarge and train my limited ear, and my musical memory. The second, to try to express personal emotional experience in musical notation. In this latter attempt I made some progress. I began with rhythm tunes on one note, then with a second simultaneous tune mathematically related to the first. Finally I could weave two or three tunes together in the manner of a Bach fugue. This was all done on paper, *and I could not recognize my own tunes when they were played on the piano.* I had to go and finger them out mechanically before I had an idea as to how they sounded. All I knew was how they felt. That I did not make more progress in harmony was due partly to the cost of lessons in harmony from any teacher that I would trust, and to the very great difficulty of studying it out of a book. But in all that time, nearly two years, I made practically no progress with my ear. I think I learned to distinguish thirds and fifths sometimes, but let me be out of practice for a week or two, and it was all one note to me. In spite of severe, sustained effort, I was no nearer recording Indian tunes than I had been before, so I sorrowfully abandoned the experiment.

Some two or three weeks later I found my deep-self haunted by a melody unrecognized but insistent. To get rid of it I wrote it in my tune book, and went to the piano to see what it was like. I played it once, twice. . . The third time I fell off the piano stool in a dead faint. *For I had recognized that tune!* About ten days earlier I had been collecting Spanish-American folk songs, and had come across an engaging little lullaby, one that had made me sigh for the thousandth time over my want of musical ear. And something in me deeper than my ear had caught that tune and reproduced it. I was as much shocked as if I had heard my own voice speaking the primitive tongue of my Cro-Magnon ancestry.

Nothing quite like that ever happened again, but there were plenty of other things to confirm me in the belief that there is very little to be accomplished for the adult talent by suggestion, and that little only at the point where the immediate-self passes into and identifies itself with the deep-self. By the proper suggestion applied at this point, talent might become much more available, more amenable to objective training; a quick and permanent command over it might be established, but it would remain unchanged in scope and quality.

Just how much more might be done for talent taken in early youth, before the deep-self relinquishes that control which it naturally exerts over the activities of the newborn, has not yet been established. It is one of the peculiarities of our culture that while it offers unprecedented facilities for the subnormal individual, there is as yet no laboratory devoted to the study

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of superior types. Stranger still, though it is everywhere admitted that the subjective consciousness, otherwise the deep-self, can be handled only by suggestion, all our schools are established in the mode of the immediate-self, as if there were nothing to a human mind but ratiocination and memory. No, I am forgetting the schools of the Roman Church and perhaps of some lesser doctrinaire groups. Though the aim of the Roman Church is merely to have its doctrines accepted as a rule of life, it still makes skilful use of the methods of suggestion developed by the great Greek and Roman and Italian Renaissance cultures. If these methods were employed to release the potentialities of modern children during the most suggestible years, it would probably not be necessary for anybody to write articles encouraging adults to release themselves from the indurations resulting from wrong suggestions received in youth.

As things are, the first step to be taken by the adult seeking easy command over his own potentialities is to recognize and erase the contrary suggestion still persisting, either in his environment or as a leftover from a social background that did not believe in genius. From the early Christian conviction that a work of genius was evidence of your having sold your soul to the Devil, down to the present Mainstreetian notion of its being an evidence of your thinking yourself smarter than other people, inhibiting notions have always obstructed the path of genius. Of all the fears that humanity is heir to, this one, that you or somebody belonging to you will be "queer", is the most stultifying. All of which makes it important to realize that genius is no more nor less than the facile use of inheritable racial experience, as natural as the circulation of the blood, and that the queer one is the one who hasn't got it. Yet we are all charged with this ancient idea of genius as a kind of supernatural endowment. I will bet a hat that whoever reads my statement that I think I have genius, will feel the faint ruffle of offense along the surface of his consciousness at my having said something insufferably conceited.

When I first began to write, my mother wished me to use a pen name under the notion that it was not quite ladylike for a female to put forth ideas over her own name, as if she thought they were really worth something. All Americans over thirty five have a trace of that in their consciousness, which is one reason why we have greater geniuses in business and engineering than in painting and writing and music—it has never yet in America been thought "queer" to be a business genius. Neither is it thought immodest to talk business shop, nor a pose to dress and live and arrange your time in the manner best suited to running a railroad or building a Panama Canal. European genius has not felt this stricture to quite the extent that we feel it here, partly because in Europe individuals have taken their standing not so much from what they do as from whom they happen to be born, and partly because the product of artist genius has had a higher intrinsic value in Europe than it has had in the United States. But taken all together, this difficulty about the nature and process of genius is in every country the one most necessary to overcome.

Further than that, every individual will have his own private inhibitions and complexes, often hiding coyly under the guise of modesty. These he must at least recognize before he can

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hope to make use of even the little we now know about the operation of suggestion upon the deep-self from which genius flows.

Although we have to class, as methods of suggestion, prayer, meditation, and various induced mystical states capable of affecting the deep-self, I shall in this paper deal only with the type most generally in use, autosuggestion by formula. At once we have to part company with Coué and his blanket formula for the restoration of health. If you trust to saying, "Every day in every way I write better and better", you are likely to be disappointed. For the production of works of genius, no two of which are exactly of the same pattern, the formula must be intelligently devised and explicit. It is also much more likely to be accepted by the deep-self if rhythmically stated. Having already written all that I know about rhythm in relation to the literary process in another book*, I shall content myself here with saying that not only does the rhythmic formula work better, but best results are obtained by the use of a rhythm which has some relation to the values to be produced. Take for example the following, adapted from the Navajo; I never go to walk in my own country, sometimes even in New York, without saying it.

> As I walk, as I walk,
> The universe is walking with me,
> Beautifully it walks before,
> Beautifully it walks behind,
> Beautifully on every side.
> As I walk I walk with beauty.

The effect desired to be produced by that is left for the reader to guess.

The object in repeating a given formula is to have it accepted by the deep-self as a rule of conduct. It is important therefore not only to state it rhythmically, as the deep-self works, but in such a manner that neither thought nor any other operation of the immediate-self can slip in between, rapidly and smoothly as prayers are repeated in the Roman Church. As Coué advises, it is better to select such times for saying it as are likely to be free from interruption, if possible when the immediate-self is naturally in a state of inattention, or at twilight of night and morning, when the subconsciousness tends to emerge. People in whom the immediate-self is particularly insistent often find it necessary to occupy their surface attention with some slight employment, as a business man will chew a cigar while engaged upon a tight problem. Never being able to find any cigars that did not taste abominably of tobacco, I early took to the use of the rosary, which Mother Veronica of the Blue Nuns at Rome taught me to use long before I heard of the school of autosuggestion at Nancy. I always keep one in my coat pocket, so that on the subway I have only to slip my hand in to finger the familiar beads, and I am at once rid of the dreadful necessity of reading the advertisements and the "Subway Sun".

Another device for engaging the attention of the deep-self and holding it to receive instruction, is to call it by name—your own, or any that suits you better. I know a distinguished Englishman who addresses his subconscious self as My Ancestors! I have often wondered if ancestor worship did not begin in one of those empirical discoveries of primitive people, that that which responds to a cry for help is more often than not the stored ancestral wisdom of the deep-self.

*_The American Rhythm._ HARCOURT, BRACE AND CO.

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The important item, in all these devices for securing the cooperation of the subconsciousness, is to realize that they are devices for that end and not formulas of intrinsic magic. They should be changed frequently and adapted to the current need. As to the number of times of repetition, that is a purely individual matter. Once is often enough, and Coué's twenty times is merely a measure of security. I have one which I can say in the time between my name's being called and my facing the audience, that will enable me to make a fair speech on any subject that I know anything about. That somebody may presently discover a way to know enough about anything to make an impromptu speech upon it, is a not unhopeful possibility.

The novice at autosuggestion had better begin with a general formula for coordinating the whole psyche for a given achievement, like this one from the Hindu:

> May this soul of mine which is an undivided part of all that has been, is now, and ever shall be, be united with the Spirit supremely Blest and supremely Intelligent, in order that it may become manifest as . . . .

closing with a statement of the thing desired.

When the suggestion works against a long continued habit of the deep-self, a general formula like the preceding is indispensable. But it should be borne in mind that the value of the formula lies not in the repetitions nor in the philosophy or religion that dictates its phraseology, but in the response. I have something that clicks in me when I have got the suggestion across. Nevertheless, I don't give up when the click is slow in coming.

Among the things that can be effected by autosuggestion are:

> The formation of regular habits of work.
>
> Regularization of the flow of ideas.
>
> Intensification of emotional response to experience.
>
> Control of the recalled reaction.
>
> Transposing technique gained in one department of artistic activity to another.
>
> Securing instant and easy command of all you know.
>
> The fixation of impressions to be reexamined later.

The last two items are of such importance to workers whose contact with the public is instant and direct, that they have more to do than almost all the others with determining the place a man may hold among his fellows. Anybody who recalls the Fabian Society of London in the old days when H. G. Wells and the Webbs were active in it, and G. B. S. chairman, will remember, quite apart from the interest of the debate, the speed and the spark of minds thoroughly in command of themselves. Theodore Roosevelt was the sort of man who could at any moment lay hands on anything he had ever known. Recently I read how when he reached England on his return from the African hunting trip, he pushed everything aside to spend a day in English lanes, listening to bird songs and comparing them with those of the United States. There is probably something inherent in the voltage of minds like these that cannot be imitated; but that one's rate of use can be greatly accelerated by autosuggestion, there is no question.

In the fixation of impressions acquired under circumstances that do not admit of immediate examination, quite remarkable things can be done by this method. Jack London told me that when he required some detail from his various travels, he would recall the whole scene like a film unrolled and select the item wanted, as from a photograph, often making new

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discoveries in a picture recalled many times. In my own experience in covering vast expanses of country in the west, I could set my subconscious mind like a camera, and it would take in and store such diverse matters as topography, botany, landscape, bird songs, and human interest, so long as I occupied the rest of myself trivially with my horse, the trail, the camp. But if I allowed myself to drift into any sort of thinking that engaged the profounder reactions, the picture was lost.

Last summer I traveled 2,500 miles by motor through New Mexico and Arizona, not taking a single note. When I began to reproduce it in a book, the only part of the picture that blurred was the end of the first and most of the second day, when physical fatigue had prevailed. I suspect that this is the way the minds of animals and very primitive men work, reeling and unreeling impressions with their natural associations; and that the faculty of recalling separate items, detached and whole, is rather a recent acquirement. Reel photography is, at any rate, one of the easiest tricks to teach your subconscious mind. Notice I say *sub* here and not *un*, for though the mechanism of storage is that of the immediate-self, this process cannot be accomplished without direct reenforcement from the deep-self.

In the beginning you will probably find that the dim places on your screen correspond to some lack of interest, and in that case it would be well to begin with a direct suggestion of interest. That is, of course, if it is important for you to acquire the habit of fixing fleeting impressions. It is always hard to work against natural interests and, where there is no special talent for dealing with a particular interest, not worthwhile except by way of illustration, like my attempt to write music. Later we shall come back, for more extended discussion, to this question of interest in relation to literary success; but in any case, whether it be the cultivation of a new interest or the acquirement of a new habit of work, it is the deep-self which is the instrument, modifying the pattern of immediate reactions first conceived by the intelligence, then formulized and communicated to the deep-self by one or another method of autosuggestion.

You will have noticed that all the things enumerated here as being best effected by formulas have to do with regulating the mechanisms of genius. If no formulas are given, it is because in order to be effective, a formula must be an expression of some sort of working cooperation established among the various types of consciousness; it should therefore be stated or selected by the individual. I have ransacked the earth for mine, combining and adapting to fit the immediate need. For autosuggestion by formula is not a new discovery; it is one of the oldest devices of man, worked out of the necessity of living in a world of which he knew next to nothing, with a self of which he knew nothing at all. I am not sure that certain activities of what we call the lower animals are not autosuggestive in their nature. Every religion and every philosophy abounds in formulas excellently designed to secure the particular desideratum of that cult. The superior culture of Greece was largely achieved by this and other methods to be described in the next paper. If you wish to know to what extent the humble and unlearned still depend upon it, turn back and read for your enlightenment Huckleberry Finn's formula for the cure of warts.

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THE PREACHER AND THE BOOK HABIT

By William L. Stidger

THE Book Man and the Parson were talking.

"More like an argument it seems to me!" said the Parson's wife after the dust had been cleared away and the remains gathered up in several baskets. And, be it said for the sake of accuracy, the remains were not the remains of the Parson but the remains of the Book Man, for toward the close of the evening the Book Man admitted that the book publishers, book sellers, and book advertisers had all been working at the wrong end.

"You're right! You're right! Be damned, you're right!" said the Book Man; and from his language it can be seen, even with half an eye, that he was not afraid to cuss a little in the presence of his friend the Parson.

"This 'Buy a Book a Week' isn't going to do the thing! You are working at the wrong end of the business", was the statement that started it all.

"Then just tell us what you think is the right end of the book market cultivation."

"It's selling the idea of reading rather than the book itself. If you fellows would get busy and find a contact with the mediums that teach people to read you would in the end reap a harvest of selling books that would astonish you. It's seed planting that you want to do. You plant the seeds of the reading habit and you'll reap the harvest of book markets."

"That sounds sensible even if it does come from a Parson", said the Book Man, who, in spite of the fact that he was a Book Man, had more or less intelligence. He could still see light when it blazed full in his eyes. "Go on Brother! Go on! I'm listening with both ears and my cigar!"

"Sell the habit of reading to the people first and you'll sell books themselves later. You'll sell thousands where you sell hundreds now. Your good books will go into numerous editions rather than just barely scrimp their way through the first edition."

"Aye, there's the rub! But how to turn the trick is the question. Teach us that and your fortune is made, my boy. Teach us that and we'll crown you with a diadem of jewels before your time!"

"It's simple", replied the Parson, who was by way of being something besides a parson. He was interested in many things: folks, automobiles, newspapers, nature, schools, and books.

"Say on!" replied the listening Book Man, as the cool winds blew in off the lake through an open window where a lace curtain was fluttering against his face. "Say on!"

"How did Mr. Hoover go about getting us to save food in the war?"

"I don't know. All I know is that we saved."

"You do not know! Then I'll tell you. Mr. Hoover called to Washington a large group of preachers when the matter of food conservation was turned over to him."

"But what has that to do with books?" said the Book Man impatiently.

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"That's just what's the matter with you book fellows. You haven't patience for the long look. You want to come to a sale too quickly. You are not willing to plant seed and let it have time to grow. You are not willing to draw your architectural plans for a book market first before you build. You want to do the thing on the 'Book a Week' basis all the time. You are impatient."

"But to your story of how Hoover got the country to sacrifice on food. To your story, narrator!"

"When Mr. Hoover had got these preachers together he said something like this to us—for I happened to be one of the group that was called to Washington. He said, 'Gentlemen, we are in a world war. The winning of that war depends largely on the United States. And the United States cannot win that war unless it sacrifices on food in order that we may send food to our allies. We cannot make the folks of a democracy save food by forcing them. That is the glory of a democracy. The only thing that will make them save food is a spiritual passion. Spiritual passion for sacrifice can be created in only one way. That is by the preachers and the churches of the nation. If you men will go back to your churches and set flaming in the hearts of America a passion for sacrificing food we can get them to do it. Otherwise we cannot.' Herbert Hoover was right. He went to the right source."

"But what has that to do with creating a market for books?" said the still impatient Book Man.

"It has this much to do with it. The preacher in his pulpit is the real medium for building a book market for the future. He is the man of books. Books are his natural habitat. That is the reason why you will find more sons of ministers in 'Who's Who in America' than the sons and daughters of any other profession. He may not have much money but he does have books. He lives and preaches and dreams in books. He knows books as you book fellows know the paper market and time tables. Books are his front yard and his back yard. Books fill his attic, his study, his parlor, his tables, his automobile, his—"

"Cellar", added the Book Man with a grin.

"Exactly! At least in the sense that the parson is one of the best sellers of books", replied the Preacher, after which the Book Man did not attempt any more book puns.

"You are more right than you think. I have fifty parson friends and I know that at least half of them actually keep one or two books in the cellar in order to have them handy to the furnace, so they can sit down a moment after fixing the fire at night to read while the smoke settles."

"Better mediums for reviews than book pages, you'll be saying next?"

"Indeed I shall. I say it now. I say that I believe it would be a more direct way of getting to a new reading market if book publishers and booksellers would introduce their wares through preachers. I believe actually that the book world is missing a good guess by not sending books more and more to preachers for review. I believe that they would get better actual results than by sending them to a book page editor."

"Why is this, my friend of the pulpit?"

"It is because the word of a preacher in commendation of a book means more than the word of a newspaper. We have got so that we distrust the average book page. It is written by men who do not know books. It is not

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done with spirit and soul. The average book review is dead and cold and lifeless. But the word of a preacher about a worthwhile book is filled with passion. He preaches on that book with passion. It is a vehicle for his truth. It flames like a sword in his hands. His hearers go forth with a passion to tell their neighbors and their office friends and their acquaintances about the book 'Dr. Jones spoke about last night!' That book is talked about and propagated with exactly the same psychology by which religion is propagated. Anything that has the church back of it flames into a crusade overnight."

"But to accomplish that you will have to have all the books that we publish and sell, *good* books."

"And I reply to that, Mr. Worldly Wise Bookseller, that if you really want to *sell* books you'll have to have them good books."

"You mean sermons?"

"No, I mean great novels: novels with spiritual purpose in them; novels with moral passion in them; novels that deal with the thing that is most important to a human soul."

"Meaning— ?"

"Meaning the glorious romance of the regeneration of a soul; the quest for decency and cleanness; the integrity of the home; the simple virtues of what Robert Service calls: 'The ancient, outworn Puritanic traditions of right and wrong!'"

"How do you prove this vision of idealism?"

"In several ways. I prove it by the theatre, I prove it by the motion picture world, I prove it by the book world of the past five years.

"For instance, my friend Frederick Thompson, he who built the New York Hippodrome, he who rehabilitated Coney Island, he who put 'Polly of the Circus' on the stage, once said to me, 'The people want clean amusement; at least ninety eight per cent of them do. From a pure business viewpoint the theatrical man who sees this will profit by it.'"

"But was your friend Fred Thompson right?"

"'Ben Hur' proves it. There is no drama that has lived so long. There is no play that has been seen by more people. Millions have seen it and millions shall yet see it. It is a perennial. 'Way Down East' is another proof that a great clean, human play will live forever. 'The Miracle Man' proves it in the world of the motion pictures. 'Intolerance' lost thousands of dollars because it was built to ridicule temperance. 'The Miracle Man' has made millions because it is a great story of regeneration. You can trace this throughout the drama and picture world."

"And the book world?"

"It is the same. The books that live are the great spiritual productions. More copies of 'In His Steps' by Charles Sheldon have been sold in the last ten years than any other book in the field."

"Why?"

"'Because good people had it in their hearts to talk about it. It was just like the telling of a religious experience to them. When one has a religious experience of any kind the first thing he wants to do is to tell his friends about it. It is that way with a good book. There is a crusader's passion behind it."

"'Almost Thou persuadest me' my friend —" said the sacrilegious Book Man.

"The legend of Jesus about describes what I mean. Some one of the Disciples said to Jesus, 'You have written nothing, Master! You have not in-

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scribed on the papyrus any of your great truths or a single word of your great program. You have done nothing but tell it to us. Have you no other way to spread your Gospel?'

"The Master looked down upon the Disciple who questioned him and said, 'I have no other way! If you fail me all is lost. I have no other way.' "

"And the application to books — I must insist upon that, Mr. Preacher."

"The application? It is that the one thing which has been propagated until it has spread over the whole earth was spread by word of mouth. And that is just the value of getting your books into the hands and into the minds and into the passions of preachers; and then, from them into the hands and minds and passions of church people. It is a great wide field as yet untouched. The book world is just beginning to know that it is there. Church people, the minute they find a good book, run with the good news of that book into the uttermost parts of their acquaintanceship; aye, even unto a stranger now and then to tell him about it. And verily does that stranger say to himself, 'Since this human being is so stirred up about this book and since I know so little about books I'll get this one and read it!' "

"Two things, my friend, you have said that are much worthwhile to me, and I would thank you", said the Book Man. "One is that the book world would do well to sell the *idea* of books for a while, rather than to sell a book; and the other is that through the preacher, or through the church, the book world could do this selling of the habit of reading and cultivate a new field.

"And how should you do this?" he added after a pause.

"First I should get a list of the leading ministers of the country. I should send my books to them exactly as to the leading newspapers. Perhaps I should not make such a wide distribution but I should certainly feel that the investment of a book in a minister's study would bring good returns if that book had something worthwhile in its pages.

"Now take myself for illustration. I must frankly confess that my first interest in the Dramatic Book Sermon, of which you have heard me preach and speak so often, came about in this way."

"Now a real plot enters into the tale of books. Lay on MacDuff! Lay on! And damned be he who first cries, 'Hold enough!' I'm listening to the bitter end." It was the sarcastic Book Man speaking.

"William Allen White was on his way to France. 'In the Heart of a Fool' was just being published. He sent me a copy through his publishers. It was autographed in red ink. But it was autographed. That counted. It made an impression on me. Every man likes a book autographed by the author. I did not know Mr. White personally and that flattered me all the more. Then came a letter from the publishers saying that just before Mr. White went to Europe he had asked that a copy of his book be sent to some of the leading ministers of the country —"

"Leading ministers—yah—and that got to your heart —" interrupted the ever cynical Book Man.

"It did — I must admit it (I am honest, which is more than some folks I know) — especially since I was just a humble sort of minister in a small church; but at least it served to make me read the book. I saw immediately that there was tremendous material in it for a swiftly moving, spiritual

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interpretation of modern industrial life in its relations to the church. I found a character in that book that was Christ in modern life and who, because he stood for Christian principles, was at last actually crucified. It seized hold of my soul in its big brawny hands and I preached what I called 'A Dramatic Book Sermon' on it. I have been preaching them ever since. I have up to this time preached over a hundred. You know my hobby in the sermonic line. I needn't talk of it here, for we have gone over that in detail before. But I have never before told you the story of how I, a preacher, was converted to the Dramatic Book Sermon. You have now heard it. It was because an editor and a publisher and an author took the pains to send me a copy of a truly great book. I can directly trace the sale of over one hundred copies of that book to my influence. Multiply one preacher by ten thousand and figure the results for yourself."

"You're right! You're right! Be damned, you're right!" said the Book Man.

And henceforth went out, and like the proverbial listener to sermons proceeded straightway not to do the thing that had been preached unto him. But instead proceeded directly to put more money into, and more energy into, the "Buy a Book a Week Campaign" and kindred measures; and verily did he not succeed any more than he had before.

But some day some publisher and some book man will see the fields ripe unto the harvest.

EPITAPH FOR A POET

By DuBose Heyward

HERE lies a spendthrift who believed
That only those who spend may keep;
Who scattered seeds, yet never grieved
Because a stranger came to reap:

A failure who might well have risen,
Yet, ragged, sang exultantly
That all success is but a prison,
And only those who fail are free:

Who took what little life had given,
And watched it blaze, and watched it die;
Who could not see a distant heaven
Because of dazzling nearer sky:

Who never flinched till earth had taken
The most of him back home again,
And the last silences were shaken
By songs too lovely for his pen.

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WHAT'S WHAT AMONG THE SEASON'S BOOKS

RECENTLY a letter came into my office from a minister's wife in the southwest. It was a nice letter. She and her husband were living in a small town with practically no library facilities. His parishioners boasted few books which she could borrow. "Tell me," she said, "honestly, is this book worth two dollars, when that's practically all I have to spend for a long time on books?" That letter made me feel rather unpleasantly responsible as I read through the publishers' catalogues. How many books are really worth two dollars or ten dollars, or fifty cents for that matter? However, I make lists gaily, and submit them for your approval. Perhaps among these titles that look interesting to my eye, you'll find a few that appeal to yours.

Among the novels I find three, already perused, that I recommend heartily:

So Big. Edna Ferber. DOUBLEDAY, PAGE.
A Cure of Souls. May Sinclair. MACMILLAN.
The Midlander. Booth Tarkington. DOUBLEDAY, PAGE.

Next on my own list will be three books by Americans. Perhaps, since they are novelettes, Margaret Deland's "New Friends in Old Chester" (Harper) do not belong here. Nevertheless, here they are. Then Dorothy Canfield's "The Home-Maker" (Harcourt, Brace) and Thomas Beer's "Sandoval: a Romance of Bad Manners" (Knopf), sure to be gay, sophisticated, well written. Two other volumes of hypersophistication will probably be Michael Arlen's "These Charming People" (Doran) and Ronald Firbank's "Prancing Nigger" (Brentano).

From English novels of the new season, here are the first ten I shall approach, and in their order:

The Dream. H. G. Wells. MACMILLAN.
The Isle of Thorns. Sheila Kaye-Smith. DUTTON.
Heirs Apparent. Philip Gibbs. DORAN.
Race. William McFee. DOUBLEDAY, PAGE.
Woodsmoke. Francis Brett Young. DUTTON.
The Three Hostages. John Buchan. HOUGHTON MIFFLIN.
Leave it to Psmith. P. G. Wodehouse. DORAN.
Vindication. Stephen McKenna. LITTLE, BROWN.
Inigo Sandys. E. B. C. Jones. HOLT.
There Is a Tide. J. C. Snaith. APPLETON.

Of American novels other than those I've already enumerated, ten, of which alas one cannot be quite so sure:

The Golden Ladder. Rupert Hughes. HARPER.
Blue Blood. Owen Johnson. LITTLE, BROWN.
The Interpreter's House. Struthers Burt. SCRIBNER.
Half Gods. Lynn Montross. DORAN.
The Gay Ones. Charles Hanson Towne. CENTURY.
The Owls' House. Crosbie Garstin. STOKES.
Red Sand. T. S. Stribling. HARCOURT, BRACE.
When Geronimo Rode. Forrestine C. Hooker. DOUBLEDAY, PAGE.
Mother of Gold. Emerson Hough. APPLETON.

The next group I have picked simply because of their monosyllabic titles. I have been wondering what has inspired these authors, many of them well known, to be so brief and yet so picturesque. Can it be the motion pictures? Watch these: "Hazard" by Nancy Barr Mavity (Harper); "Guilt"

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by Henry James Forman (Boni, Liveright), "Siege" by Samuel Hopkins Adams (Boni, Liveright), "Mirage" by Edgar Lee Masters (Boni, Liveright), "Nightshade" (Dutton), a realistic anonymous novel that sounds interesting, "Waste" by Robert Herrick (Harcourt, Brace), "Triumph" by May Edginton (Holt), "Imperturbe" by Elliot H. Paul (Knopf), and "Recompense" by Robert Keable (Putnam).

For adventure and for titles that sound gay and alluring, I should first pick the reissues of two of Rafael Sabatini's books (Houghton Mifflin), then "The Scarlet Iris" by Vance Thompson (Bobbs-Merrill), "Empty Hands" by Arthur Stringer (Bobbs-Merrill), "Mrs. Phelps' Husband" by Adriana Spadoni (Bobbs-Merrill), "Fidelia" by Edwin Balmer (Dodd, Mead), "The Snob" by Helen R. Martin (Dodd, Mead), "The Wrath to Come" by E. Phillips Oppenheim (Little, Brown), and "Pandora La Croix" by Gene Wright (Lippincott).

Here are five books of rather special appeal. Jessie Redmon Fauset writes of the Negro problem in "There Is Confusion" (Boni, Liveright); John Cournos, always interesting, sometimes morbid, gives us "The New Candide" (Boni, Liveright); Maxwell Bodenheim, ironic, iconoclastic, calls his novel "Crazy Man" (Harcourt, Brace); Ruth Suckow, writer of distinguished sketches, gives us "Country People" (Knopf); and D. H. Lawrence collaborates with an Australian woman in writing "The Boy in the Bush" (Seltzer).

Of translations there are several that should be most interesting: "Within a Budding Grove" by the late Marcel Proust (Seltzer); "Gold" (Harcourt, Brace) by Jacob Wassermann, whose "The World's Illusion" was a sensation several seasons ago; "Buddenbrooks" (Knopf) by the German Thomas Mann; "The Prisoner Who Sang" (Century) by Johan Bojer, whose recent visit to this country has doubtless increased his popularity; "The Don Juanes" by Marcel Prevost (Brentano); and "The Long Walk of Samba Diouf" by Jerome and Jean Tharaud (Duffield).

There are two first novels of particular interest to me, because they have been done by young members of the publishing profession, "You Too" by Roger Burlingame (Scribner) and "The Green Bay Tree" by Louis Bromfield (Stokes). Then there are two novels by young Yale men (oh, many more than two!). Wayland Wells Williams, whose "Family" was so excellent, gives us "I, the King" (Stokes), and a newly graduated young man, John Wiley, has a story of undergraduate days titled "The Education of Peter" (Stokes). Approaching youth comes the announcement of "Shoreless Seas" (Putnam), much hailed in England, by the sixteen year old Mollie Panter-Downes.

Of short stories and collected novelettes one finds many from distinguished pens. Most interesting, perhaps, is "Old New York" (Appleton), four period novels by Edith Wharton. These stories are laid from 1840-1870, and they are published separately or in a box as a set. Kathleen Norris has gathered a series of Irish family tales under the rather provocative title, "The Callahans and the Murphys" (Doubleday, Page).

The two collections I shall turn to first are Arthur Mason's "The Cook and the Captain Bold" (Atlantic), and Alice Duer Miller's "Are Parents People?" (Dodd, Mead). But there should be much fun in Richard Connell's "Apes and Angels" (Minton,

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Balch), sophisticated snobbery in Elizabeth Bibesco's "The Fir and the Palm" (Putnam), quiet delight in Ernest Bramah's "The Eyes of Max Carrados" (Doran), and intuitive wisdom in Bernice Brown's "Men of Earth" (Putnam).

In the matter of pure enjoyment, travel I suppose comes next. Five I pick at once: "Man and Mystery in Asia" by Ossendowski and "The White Devil of the Black Sea" (Minton, Balch) by his collaborator, Lewis Stanton Palen. Then Robert J. Flaherty's "My Eskimo Friends" (Doubleday, Page) and William Beebe's "Galápagos; World's End" (Putnam), finishing with Rockwell Kent's "Voyaging" —southward from the Strait of Magellan (Putnam). One gay guidebook that I shall look at with interest is Clara E. Laughlin's "So You're Going to Paris!" (Houghton Mifflin). There are two African books, and very different in manner, I imagine— Martin Johnson's "Camera Trails in Africa" (Century) and "African Clearings" (Houghton Mifflin) by Jean Kenyon Mackenzie, whose exquisite sketches are already well known.

With one exception—the authorized abridged edition (by Edward Garnett) of Charles Doughty, called in this case "Wanderings in Arabia" (Seltzer)— I choose these last five travelogues from their titles, knowing little of them: "The Lake Superior Country" by T. Morris Longstreth (Century), "Adventures in the Near East 1918-22" by Lieutenant Colonel A. Rawlinson (Dodd, Mead), "Vikings of the Ice" by George Allan England (Doubleday, Page), and "To Lhasa in Disguise" by William Montgomery McGovern (Century).

Of autobiographical records, perhaps the most interesting will be "The Failure" by Giovanni Papini (Harcourt, Brace). Five others present themselves immediately:

The Social Ladder. Mrs. John King Van Rensselaer. HOLT.
Footlights and Spotlights. Otis Skinner. BOBBS-MERRILL.
The Biography of Samuel Gompers. By himself. DUTTON.
My Book and Heart. Corra Harris. HOUGHTON MIFFLIN.
Sunlight and Song. Maria Jeritza. APPLETON.

"The Confessions of a Prima Donna" (Stokes), anonymous and American, also appear. Then there are "My Life" (Duffield), revised and corrected from the account of a peasant by Leo Tolstoy, and "My Life in Art" by the director of the Moscow Art Players, Constantin Stanislavsky (Little, Brown).

Unconventional autobiography, usually by younger men, leads off with "Now that I'm Fifty" by Albert Payson Terhune (Doran). Then there is Cosmo Hamilton's "Unwritten History" (Little, Brown), Algernon Blackwood's "Episodes Before Thirty" (Dutton), H. W. Nevinson's "Changes and Chances" (Harcourt, Brace), Maria Thompson Daviess's (she wrote "The Melting of Molly") "Seven Times Seven" (Dodd, Mead), and the probably fictional and certainly unusual "Mr. Archer, U. S. A." as told to R. H. Platt, Jr. (Doubleday, Page).

Autobiographical, in a sense, are the "Letters from a Senator's Wife" by Frances Parkinson Keyes (Appleton) and "A Late Harvest" (Atlantic), collected papers from Charles W. Eliot, president emeritus of Harvard, whose ninetieth birthday comes on March 20.

Of literary and critical studies the one most anticipated is probably "Ariel—The Life of Shelley" by André Maurois (Appleton). Those who have read this unusual biography in the French praise it highly. It has

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been translated by Ella D'Arcy. Five other studies of some note follow:

Letters from W. H. Hudson, 1901-1922. Edward Garnett. DUTTON.
Thackeray and His Daughter. Hester Thackeray Ritchie. HARPER.
D. H. Lawrence: An American Interpretation. Herbert J. Seligmann. SELTZER.
James Joyce: His First Forty Years. Herbert S. Gorman. HUEBSCH.
Leonid Andreyev: A Critical Study. Alexander Kaun. HUEBSCH.

A rare combination of autobiography and history is "Some Memories of the Civil War" by George Haven Putnam (Putnam), and an unusual interpretative biographical sketch, H. G. Wells's "The Story of a Great Schoolmaster" (Macmillan). There is also the extraordinary "St. Francis of Assisi" by G. K. Chesterton (Doran), and Gamaliel Bradford's psychological study of the great diarist, "The Soul of Samuel Pepys" (Houghton Mifflin). Young Boswell gives us a series of contemporary sketches in "People You Know" (Boni, Liveright).

Here are two presidential biographies culled from the many: David Lawrence's "The True Story of Woodrow Wilson" (Doran) and Horace Green's "President Calvin Coolidge" (Duffield).

Five biographical studies which recommend themselves by reason of subject are:

Intimate Character Sketches of Abraham Lincoln. Henry B. Rankin. LIPPINCOTT.
The Boyhood of Edward MacDowell. Abbie Farwell Brown. STOKES.
An Intimate Portrait of R. L. S. Lloyd Osbourne. SCRIBNER.
Life and Letters of Emily Dickinson. Martha Dickinson Bianchi. HOUGHTON MIFFLIN.
The Real John Burroughs. William Sloane Kennedy. FUNK, WAGNALLS.

Of poetry there is much that is interesting, little that strikes me as being important.

Quite by itself stands E. A. Robinson's "The Man Who Died Twice" (Macmillan), as in the case of much of his recent work, dramatic and involved psychological study.

Picking five volumes for my own poetry shelves, I should choose Archibald MacLeish's "The Happy Marriage" (Houghton Mifflin), a most unusual sonnet sequence, Arthur Davison Ficke's "Out of Silence" (Knopf), DuBose Heyward's "Sky Lines and Horizons" (Macmillan), David Morton's "Harvest" (Putnam), and Dorothy Dow's "Black Babylon" (Boni, Liveright).

Five more, however, strike me as being quite as likely to be good—Glenn Ward Dresbach's "The Enchanted Mesa" (Holt), "Poems" by the critic J. E. Spingarn (Harcourt, Brace), Helen Hoyt's "Apples Here in My Basket" (Harcourt, Brace), "The Skyline Trail" by Mary Carolyn Davies (Bobbs-Merrill), and "Sunrise Trumpets" by Joseph Auslander (Harper).

In plays we have more than are usually obtainable of the successes of the season. First, of course, come Shaw's "Saint Joan" (Brentano) and Sutton Vane's "Outward Bound" (Boni, Liveright). We have, too, "The Changelings" by Lee Wilson Dodd (Dutton) and "The Lullaby and Other Plays" by Edward Knoblock (Putnam). There is a new volume of collected plays by Eugene O'Neill (Boni, Liveright), and a new play, "The Lady of Belmont", by St. John G. Ervine (Macmillan). Perhaps most important from our standpoint is Brentano's "Contemporary Drama Series" which at a dollar apiece includes many current successes such as "Tarnish", "Chains", "Sun-Up", "Casanova", etc.

For essays I should first choose six volumes:

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Studies in Murder. Edmund Lester Pearson. MACMILLAN.
The Taking of Helen and Other Prose Selections. John Masefield. MACMILLAN.
At a Venture. Charles A. Bennett. HARPER.
Under Dispute. Agnes Repplier. HOUGHTON MIFFLIN.
Looking at Life. Floyd Dell. KNOPF.
Latitudes. Edwin Muir. HUEBSCH.

Then there are five collections from young Americans of varying sympathies—"The Three Fountains" (Scribner) from the highly æsthetic Stark Young; "The Enchanted Aisles" (Putnam) from the literary-dramatic Alexander Woollcott; "Literary Lanes" from the ambulatory Robert Cortes Holliday (Doran); "The Seven Lively Arts" (Harper) from the quarrelsome Gilbert Seldes; and "Sportlights of 1923" (Putnam) from the handsome and entertaining Grantland Rice.

Perhaps it is imagination — I have no statistics on the subject — but it seems to me that more good books of essays are being published than in some recent years. There is, for example, "Essays of To-Day" (Little, Brown), an anthology edited by F. H. Pritchard. On general critical lines are three very promising volumes: "Many Minds" by Carl Van Doren (Knopf); a symposium which is already out and has been well received, "Criticism in America, Its Function and Status" (Harcourt, Brace); and a new volume dealing chiefly with American subjects by Dr. Joseph Collins called "Taking the Literary Pulse" (Doran). Along with these one might well read "The American Mind in Action" by Harvey O'Higgins (Harper). Two foreign books seem to merit mention here — a collection of debates, including Sheila Kaye-Smith versus Rebecca West, Ian Hay versus Sinclair Lewis, etc., and titled, "Yea and Nay" (Brentano); and Herman George Scheffauer's study of "The New Vision in the German Arts" (Huebsch).

Among the general books I have made a first choice of five which, as I read the list, seems absurd, but which I think you may agree is not without its points:

The Fabulous Forties. Meade Minnigerode. PUTNAM.
Smugglers and Smuggling. A. Hyatt Verrill. DUFFIELD.
The Real Trouble with the Farmers. Herbert Quick. BOBBS-MERRILL.
What Shall I Be? Open Roads for Young Men. Clayton H. Ernst. APPLETON.
Stories from Mythology (North American). Cora Morris. MARSHALL JONES.

Of books political I find the first, naturally, "The Price of Freedom" by Calvin Coolidge (Scribner). Then there are "J. Ramsay MacDonald: The Man of Tomorrow" by Iconoclast (Seltzer), "The Foreign Policies of Soviet Russia" by Alfred L. P. Dennis (Dutton), "Plans for World Peace" (Scribner), being some collected plans of the Bok contest, and "British-American Relations" by J. D. Whelpley (Little, Brown).

That Edward L. Bernays's excellent study of publicity, "Crystallizing Public Opinion" (Boni, Liveright), and Don Marquis's "The Old Soak's History of the World" (Doubleday, Page) belong together is improbable; but there does appear to be a connection between "Prison and Common Sense" by Thomas Mott Osborne (Lippincott) and "The Policewoman: Her Service and Ideals" by Mary E. Hamilton (Stokes).

Among all the religious books I find only two that immediately interest me from the standpoint of general reading—a non-technical analysis, "Evolution", by Vernon Kellogg (Appleton), and splendid John Jay Chapman's "Letters and Religion" (Atlantic).

—*J. F.*

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THE LONDONER

The Death of Arthur Clutton-Brock---Sir Arthur Quiller-Couch's Resignation From Cambridge---Romancers as Critics---A Letter From Frank Swinnerton.

LONDON, March 1, 1924.

THE death of Arthur Clutton-Brock, which occurred in the early days of the year, has saddened me very much, because Clutton-Brock, quite apart from any question of his ability as a philosopher and æsthetic critic, was one whom it was impossible not to love. For one thing, his infectious enthusiasm was inexhaustible. His mind was always active. I can remember his once coming into a room where I was and, without preamble, demanding: "Why do men wax their mustaches?" It was not a riddle; it was a sociological inquiry. And of course, as the inquirer was Clutton-Brock, matters did not drop there. They went on. They ranged from mustaches to men, from men to God, from God to the nature of heaven, from heaven to music, and so to Mozart and Mozart's "Cosi Fan Tutte". With Clutton-Brock all inquiries tended to do that. They covered immense ground, and they always ended with heaven and Mozart. He used to say that Mozart had the telephone on to heaven. This without irreverence. He had a marvelous fund of stories and quotations, a subtle, questioning mind, great (if peculiar) sense of humor; and he used these things in his own way. I have seen him sitting handling the bowl of his pipe as I never saw anybody else handling the bowl of a pipe—with a constant caressing flick of the grasping fingers, smiling as he spoke, his brown face not so much glowing as in constant mobility. When he laughed or smiled his mouth did not open wide, but showed his teeth in a kind of beatific grin. It was amusing to see his eagerness, to hear his anecdotes, his limericks; and it was impressive also to hear the relish with which he would repeat from memory long and beautiful extracts from such writers as Shaftesbury, Donne, and Gibbons. His love of Samuel Butler (the author of "The Way of All Flesh") was noteworthy It was always coming out. The irreverence of Butler's mind delighted him. Irreverence—if it were witty—always delighted him. He himself was irreverent in a reverent way. Many of his writings were upon religious themes, and his acquaintance with bishops was unsurpassed; yet to the religious nature he added a pleasure in the antic which made him entirely humane. When first I heard him speak of God I was struck by the sense that he did not make God cheap, as many preachers make Him. (Mr. Chesterton has this same gift.) He had some æsthetic idea of God as abstract beauty which never staled. When Clutton-Brock said "God" he did not mean a retributive tyrant. He meant, as far as I could gather, nothing anthropomorphic at all. He meant something which mystics mean when they say "God is Love". Clutton-Brock in that respect was a mystic. He was never other than mystic. When he spoke of art, it was not as an expert technician, but as a mystic.

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For that reason he was one of the few men—not themselves artists—who understand artists. When he wrote about an artist, or about a picture or a book or a piece of music, it was not from the outside, but after he had used his imagination. His imagination was that of the artist. He knew, not *how* the artist works, but *why*, and at the bidding of what incomprehensible impulse. Once he wrote an article, which it was his intention to expand, upon the relation of an artist to his art, and this was one of the most remarkable of his works. He also planned an ingenious work upon what he considered the great human fallacy or illusion — the illusion of each one of us that we shall reach the fullest life through one or other self indulgence. In some men, he said, this passion for absolute self fulfilment takes the form of self expression by means of art; in others, by way of sex, by way of drink, by way of drugs, and so on. Hence in so many cases disillusion, despair. . . . I may do injustice to his ideas, but the energy and spirit of his disquisition is a thing firmly in my memory. After all, it was the personality of Clutton-Brock, the lovable and eager personality, which struck one more than his ideas. Those works of his which dealt more particularly with theological matters never seemed to me to be convincing or well written. The reasoning seemed to me very frequently specious, the writing sentimental. Upon æsthetic subjects, on the contrary, I always found him at his best. Even there, it was for the idea let loose, the sudden clarifying notion which shot like sunlight into the middle of what were sometimes merely subtleties, that I read with delight. One felt that Clutton-Brock might very well be wrong in particular judgments — he had not the abrupt certainty of the technician—but these things were inspirations. He caught them flying, and they flashed from him to the reader as inescapable truths.

Another aspect of Clutton-Brock which is not always recalled is his great love of gardens. "God Almighty first planted a garden", said Francis Bacon; "and indeed it is the purest of human pleasures." Such it was to Clutton-Brock. He had, in his latter years, reclaimed the steep sandy garden of his house at Godalming. Coming to it—a rather barren adjunct to a spacious house built by Lutyens—he was told that nothing would grow there. Under his most loving care (he planned it and himself did much of the hard manual work of creation) the garden was approaching his ideal when he was taken so seriously ill more than a year ago. The garden was laid out in terraces; so that when one looked up at it from below one saw it as a whole — with massed colors so delicately arranged and contrasted that one had no eye for particular beauties. These came later, as the inspection grew more intimate. Rare plants and familiar ones contributed to the scene; but it was rock gardening at its very best. I could not, in a description, give a just idea of the whole or the details. The sight of Clutton-Brock in his garden, with a spade, still flicking the bowl of his pipe — a rather short, eager looking man with a careless sweep of brown hair across his forehead—was delightful. It will always be a memory. A loquacious, endlessly philosophizing man, who would break from serious thoughts into comic ones without warning, who mixed farcical stories with profundities, and cabbages with Mozart, he was a friend

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ill to lose. I for one shall regret his death very greatly. He was always, for me, a charming and stimulating talker; and there was in him a sweetness and beauty of spirit which made him outstanding even in the company (in which I often saw him) of men perhaps more distinguished in specific achievement than himself.

* * * *

Another change has recently occurred which spells loss to many people, and that is the resignation from his chair of poetry at Cambridge of Sir Arthur Quiller-Couch. Like Clutton-Brock, Quiller-Couch was educated at Oxford, and I believe that for those skilled in such matters it was easy to detect (and is still easy to detect) the mark of Oxford upon the minds of both. But Sir Arthur Quiller-Couch had done much good work for Cambridge. Like many other successful teachers he shone less in his judgment than in his power to inspire the appreciation (and let us hope the judgment) of others. In that respect he has been one of the most successful poetry professors that either university has known. I fancy that Sir Walter Raleigh was somewhat similar in his own position at Oxford. It often happens. The best critic may kill literature for others. Appraisement becomes an art in itself, and most human beings are unfortunately not artists to the extent that they can criticize life into great (but sometimes half dead) literature. If, as I quoted Mrs. Woolf the other month as saying, some of our modern writers are "already a little chill", how much more chill are some of the eminents of the past! Yet, as we know, professors of all kinds have to draw the line somewhere, and I can remember one of them once saying very drily: "Of course, there is—professorially—no literature later than 1850." In America Quiller-Couch has notoriously been a great success at Cambridge. Those who would never have attended lectures from a more academic man have flocked to hear him, and Sir Arthur has thus done the great good thing that a teacher of literature can do. He has shown that the good is not necessarily the dull. It is something for which he deserves the thanks of all who love literature. His work in that field began long years ago in the old "Speaker" (before that journal was superseded by "The Nation"), and he published his weekly essays in book form under the title of "Adventures in Criticism". You will see from this title that Sir Arthur felt criticism to be a strange art, since he styles his essays "adventures". They were not so exciting as all that. They were less adventurous for the reader than for the author. But they were written in a pleasant, fresh, loose manner, were easily assimilable, and gave quite a clear indication of Sir Arthur's love of books. It is a strange thing, this expository love of books among men who lack critical judgment. Sir Arthur is not the only romantic novelist who has turned his mind and his pen to the handling of other men's work; and always the result has been the same. The books appeal to those who love but who cannot yet judge books. They are inspiriting, they are pioneer work; and they have no permanent importance. Yet their authors, appealing first of all to those who know and love them as romancers, figure with assurance in an alien field. They are as authoritative as real critics. They thump the table. They inspire their readers with contempt for unmanly and unhealthy poets and critics—romance and a kind of bourgeois com-

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mon sense for some reason in modern times go together — and for a time they are victorious. And then something happens. Their books cease to be read. The views they express cease to be current. I cannot suppose that the critical works of Sir Arthur Quiller-Couch or Sir Arthur Conan Doyle will outlast the lifetime of their authors. There have been many such books as theirs; but they have for their brief hour a value as being written for the young and inexperienced. On the whole, I believe they may do the cause of literature (if there is such a cause) more good than books written with more sophisticated motives. I am sure I hope so. Cambridge will be hard put to it (as was Oxford upon the death of Sir Walter Raleigh) to find a successor to Sir Arthur Quiller-Couch who will inspire among his hearers so true and so ardent a love of letters.

* * * *

When he went to America a month or two ago, Frank Swinnerton promised to note and to report to me as far as he was able to do the relative standing of English writers in that country. I have now received a voluminous epistle from Swinnerton, who appears to be enjoying himself very much, from which I extract the following passages upon this subject:

"One thing that has surprised me very much is the absence of interest among American readers in our best sellers. When I speak of Miss Ethel M. Dell, for instance, everybody says, as the Duke of Wellington said when the unfamiliar names of a particular new ministry were announced to him: 'Who? Who?' It is singular. Also, various others of our most popular authors are unheard of here. On the other hand, I am often asked about writers who in England have no tremendous vogue. For example, Ronald Firbank. There is a good deal of interest in Katherine Mansfield, but for the most part praise of her work is cautious. I gather that it is felt she has been a little overpraised, and perhaps even exploited. Walter de la Mare is greatly admired. John Masefield is a hero everywhere. He and Alfred Noyes are the two English poets most named to me; and this is partially accounted for by the fact that Alfred Noyes has been for so long a professor at, I think, Princeton.

"Among novelists, I am most often asked about Joseph Conrad and W. J. Locke, the latter of whom is obviously much admired. Hugh Walpole is affectionately remembered everywhere, owing to his visits here, and must be very popular as a writer, although I am given different estimates of his talent in each town I visit. Favorable estimates of course predominate. Wells is in much the same position here as I gather he is in England. Many people quiver at the mention of his name, but all want to hear everything about him that they can. Galsworthy is widely read and respected. I have been delighted at the affection (there is no other word) which is everywhere felt for Arnold Bennett. One lady said to me: 'I've always wanted to shake hands with Mr. Bennett and I reckon you're the next best thing!' His new book, 'Riceyman Steps', has had a tumultuously enthusiastic press, and is being widely read. I am asked if I have read 'The Judge' (partly owing to the fact that Rebecca West is lecturing here) and when I say I have not done so there is some disappointment, as obviously opinion is divided about the book.

"William McFee, who is also lectur-

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ing, is a subject of comment in the town which he was visiting or is to visit. He was taken round the Stockyards (I have escaped these) in Chicago, and was told the old story about everything of the pig being used except the squeal. His comment was: 'And now you've got the radio I suppose you'll use even that.' Every now and then I run into little branches of Mackenzie enthusiasts. Strong disapprobation of Lawrence is expressed everywhere, but his works are read. Sheila Kaye-Smith is a good deal read, and I am asked about her by all sorts of people from coast to coast. Kipling is very much admired, although it does not seem to be known that he has written a history of the Irish Guards and a book for boy scouts and girl guides. I have been asked very often about him. J. M. Barrie (whose title is still unfamiliar to Americans) is much loved. Everybody listens with interest when I tell how 'The Young Visiters' came to be published. I have been asked once about Miss Marie Corelli. Not as often as I expected about A. S. M. Hutchinson. All over the United States I come across Huxley enthusiasts (Aldous Huxley), in ones or small groups. David Garnett's 'Lady into Fox' has been read, but has not repeated its English furor. Perhaps this was to be expected.

"It is awfully interesting to catch the points which make a writer popular in this country. I should say that American readers do not require for extreme popularity (as English readers do) that mixture of sadism and sentiment which makes English novels sell by the hundred thousand. To religious themes they may be as sensitive — I do not know. On the whole, I should say that while there may be a good deal of crowd reading or sentimental reading on the part of large numbers of people (the press has more power here than in England) there is an extraordinarily acute ability on the part of the educated American to distinguish between what is sincere work and what is supplied for a hypothetical market. The 'goods' are suspect. Americans are suspicious because they are sensitive; and I believe that they prefer sincerity in a book even to wit. But I am not going to generalize about Americans. I will only say that I find several notions current regarding the English, and in particular the English writer. One man, having heard me speak, hurried after me to say: 'Mr. Swinnerton — I just wanted to say that, like all the other Englishmen I've ever met, you're not a bit like an Englishman!' He meant, I gather, to compliment me. This is because from coast to coast I find certain convictions absolutely fixed in the minds of Americans regarding Englishmen:

"1. No Englishman has any sense of humor.

"2. All Englishmen wear monocles.

"3. Englishmen drink tea all day.

"4. Englishmen are all supercilious.

"One interviewer opened his inquiries by saying: 'What do you think the chief faults of American writers?' I replied: 'It isn't the faults so much as the qualities that strike me.' He said: 'Ah, that's English evasiveness.' So you see he had me both ways. But when he found that I was not ready to patronize or misbehave (and really such suspicion draws a horrible picture of English authors who have formerly visited America) he was by no means so abrupt as this strange opening would suggest. I must in this connection

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say that although all through the tour I have spoken very freely to interviewers, only in one case has there been any indiscretion; and this was the pardonable use of something I did not say for the purpose of showing (the interviewer was a woman) that I was a wit."

I have quoted Swinnerton's comments at length because I think they may be of interest to both English and American readers. They leave nothing for me to say except that D. H. Lawrence is in London after his long sojourn in the United States, and that he plans to return immediately to the United States, on the ground that in England we are only half alive. As Sinclair Lewis, after his first visit to England, said exactly the same thing, there is a really alarming consensus of opinion on this point.

SIMON PURE

POET

By Babette Deutsch

DO NOT take me to your breast,
I shall plant there only thorn;
Let the day rise in the west
That you will not rise to mourn.

Ask no truth from this my tongue
That was framed to utter lies.
For compassion look among
Jaguars, never in my eyes.

Wild honey and locust meat
In the desert feed to me;
Thinner fare I'll have you eat:
Blossoms from the Judas tree.

Though you bind me with the thongs
Of love or hatred, you must find
One enchantment still belongs
To my unregenerate mind.

I shall labor to environ
Creatures never hunted yet;
Bodiless and strong as iron
Is the snare that I shall set.

While you think you hold me fast
I shall chase the unicorn.
Do not reap of seed I cast:
You shall harvest thorn.

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PORTRAIT OF A LITERARY LADY

By Ernest Boyd

With Sketches by Dwight Taylor

AGE often withers, but custom never stales her infinite variety. She is with us in all her phases, and adds not a little to the culpable, as well as the innocent, merriment of literary life. When one first beholds her she is usually young and eager; her final incarnation is a portly self sufficiency or an acidulous dissatisfaction. If she were a man she would be either a Falstaff or an Ignatius Loyola, for a fleshly geniality or a spare intensity is the end of all flesh that clothes the ardent soul of the literary lady. Fortunately, when she reaches this point in her career she has usually amassed the fair rewards of her talent in such measure as to enable her to invoke the assistance of a fashionable dressmaker in repressing the generosity or in concealing the parsimony of nature. Whatever the outward shell may be, the inner woman falls into either one or other of these classes, and acts accordingly. But between her origins and this goal of consecrated fame there lies a road along which the traffic is animated, gay flowers of romance nod invitingly in the adjacent meadows, there are thorny byways, but the stream of pilgrims in search of adventure flows on, to the delight of the disinterested spectator.

Her origins are as various as herself. Sometimes she springs into the literary arena like another Athena, fully armed, from the bosom of a family already famous in the academic groves and in the world of polite letters. More usually she begins in the traditional manner, befitting this great Republic, from the very bottom of the Jacob's Ladder which leads right up to the heaven of Fame in New York. The romantic process of "making the grade" has an irresistible appeal for all citizens of these States, and so I prefer to dwell upon those careers which present analogies with the successes achieved in the stern world of commerce and industry by working from the bottom up. Let us contemplate once more the divine plan in nature, whereby the grub evolves into a chrysalis and finally emerges as a butterfly of the Muses, fanning her lovely wings in the warm breezes of admiration and flattery.

The literary lady comes, for preference, from the middle west where, as the experts tell us, the genius of American literature blossoms out of humble and often drab surroundings. Her family, certainly, had no pretensions of an æsthetic kind and were merely mildly amused by her girlish affection for the books obtainable at the Free Library and her vague ambition to be a poet. When she published some verses anonymously in the local newspaper they were not averse to confessing with some pride, at the Church socials and similar entertainments, that their little girl was the author. Against mothers who

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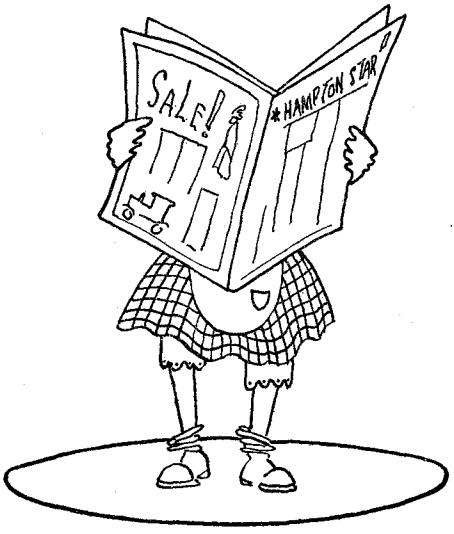
shared their daughters' conviction that the movies opened up a career for their looks, if not their talents, her mother urged the higher claims of literature for her own child. She, honest woman, had never trifled with the arts, and knew no intellectual dalliance other than that which she occasionally enjoyed in "The Ladies' Home Journal", where she restricted her attention to its hints as to practical matters of the household, with a glance, now and then, at some of the magazine's more spectacular moral campaigns. By the time she could subside into a rocker on the front porch in the late afternoon, the daily round and the trivial task had incapacitated her for active citizenship in the republic of letters. However, with a literary daughter on her hands, she found herself inevitably assuming the responsibilities which



"She published some verses anonymously"

the American man traditionally leaves to his women folk. Father, at all events, was entirely uninterested in the girl's career.

He could not afford to send her to a university and so, to this day, she gazes a little enviously at the Phi Beta Kappa keys that adorn some of her contemporaries on state occasions, when such insignia are perhaps even more effective than good looks. She wasted a couple of years at an inferior college for women, a period of gloom lightened only by a growing consciousness of her own inspiration. She had left behind her the anonymity of the local press and her signature was becoming familiar to the editors of magazines in the east. One genial member of that honorable profession, in particular, who viewed with a friendly sympathy all signs of intellectual activity west of Pittsburg, returned her manuscripts but accompanied them with letters so friendly and stimulating that she found herself telling him all that troubled her ingenuous mind. Whereat he, scenting the possibilities of a story or two exposing the seamier side of American civilization, renewed his exhortations to her to write. She sent him several epigrams on love and marriage, so excruciating in their cynicism that he could not but acquiesce when she asked him to autograph her copy of his early opus on Nietzsche. Meanwhile, "The Bellman", "Reedy's Mirror", "The Outlook", and "The Midland" were printing her verses. With her autographed Nietzsche in her valise and the light of determination shining in her eyes, she set out for Chicago, the first station on her road to glory.

A veil of discretion has been drawn over her brief sojourn in that windy oasis, indiscreet though she has always been in matters of less interest to the literary historian. It was there that love first entered her life, and she gave to Amor what she had doubtless intended for the Muses; but Amor, it

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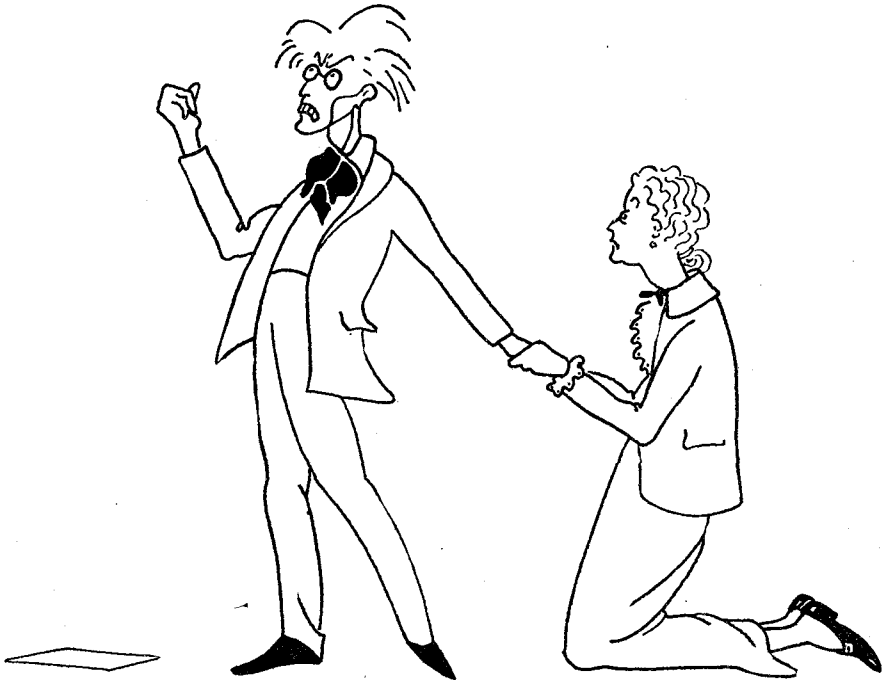

"She used her knowledge of this man made world"

must be added, has since returned the compliment a thousandfold. Love, it is true, smiled but to deceive, but in that deception was involved an education which remains the only effort of that kind which she has ever made. Of course the hero was a literary editor and a radical, so that it was a liberal education, ranging from economics, feminism, and birth control to nights with the British poets and expert advice in the polishing of lines and the preparation of manuscript for the press. "Poetry" had just begun to appear, and it was to the stern scrutiny of its editors that the first offerings of her now experienced Muse were submitted. I think the note of exultant passion somewhat alarmed the censors, but finally she did appear in that "Magazine of Verse".

At this stage the literary lady was a chrysalis on the verge of self realization. She could hear the east a-calling, and she longed to be where the best is like the worst. The gay romance of song had waned, and literary Chicago itself seemed to have its eyes turned toward the east. Like another Pucelle, she hearkened to her Voices—editorial, chiefly—urging her to linger no longer but to pursue her quest to the very shores of the Atlantic. Her good mother, innocent of the craft and guile of the Evil One, rejoiced that her daughter had chosen literature rather than Hollywood, and the printed evidence of her success dried the tears which she might have shed over the loss of her child. The announcement of the latter's departure for New York, reenforced by quotations from the more laudatory and optimistic passages in the letters of

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the editorial sirens, was received with resignation slightly tinged with pride. And on the impulse of this latter emotion, a small contribution toward the pilgrim's progress was dispatched from the family purse.

Her first weeks in New York still seem like chapters from some fairy tale, so mysteriously did Fate move its wonders to perform. Her Chicago letters of introduction at once admitted her into circles where high thinking and—when possible—not too plain living were the rule. She discovered on the part of sympathetic males an even greater disposition to be helpful than in Chicago, where her opportunities had been rather restricted by the exclusive insistence of Passion. Now she was captain of her own soul, and her head was unbowed unless when she gracefully and deliberately inclined it to meet eyes that willingly lost themselves in hers. At studio parties she at once assumed a place of her own, and her victims, if insignificant, were numerous. She found that her work aroused an immediate response in those who had but recently emerged from the shelter of the universities. But she realized that ambition must be made of sterner stuff, so she made a judicious choice from her published and unpublished poems and set out to find a publisher.

It was then that she first used her knowledge of this man made world to achieve a purpose other than the realization of her own tremulous soul. As she sat in the publisher's office, her eyelids drooping demurely, she became aware of a vast and powerful sympathy on his part with one so young, so inexperienced, and so fair. She read to him one or two of those never to be forgotten verses, in which she has recorded her ceaseless pursuit of Love that is forgotten almost as soon as it is born. She looked so frail, so simple, and that voice was an enchantment to an ear accustomed to a cynicism more carefully concealed because induced by a more authentic sophistication. The eternal struggle was on. A publisher actually held in his hands "youth's sweet scented manuscript". The result, as she soon saw, was a foregone conclusion: she came, she saw, and was published.

Long before that first little volume of verse was on the editorial tables, she had extended her operations to the editors themselves. She had only to present herself to receive the nicest welcome, usually followed by an invitation to lunch. How these luncheon parties of two dragged on, amid the glare of much gilt, and the tawdry softness of red plush, intended to convey hints of Paris and the *beaux arts*. A cocktail or two always helped in the consideration of plans and manuscripts, and the wines were so well selected that she had to rely less upon sheer technique and could let nature do the rest. They were delightful and fruitful conferences, out of which came friendships that have survived even the pitiless publicity of her poetic versions of them. Nor was the ostensible purpose of the meetings forgotten, for out of them came the stimulus which eventually produced her book of prose—needless to say, a disingenuous chronicle of middle western inhibitions.

Meanwhile her fame as a poetess had grown, her not too frequent volumes were sure of an enthusiastic press, and doors opened to her as easily as hearts—more easily, in fact, when the hearts were feminine, for like most of her sex, she believed that men understood her so much better than women. But her colleagues

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"She retains her girlish predilection"

among her own sex had become acutely conscious of her existence. Her prowesses—in literature, needless to say—were duly listed in the Bulletin of the League of American Pen Women, and she recited her poems to the New York Poetry Society. It is at such functions that the peculiar exercise of all her talents can be most effectively studied. If a rival is actively present she can be relied upon to do whatever is necessary to create a diversion in her own favor, even to the extent of walking in late while another is reading. If called upon for a critical opinion of a rival's work she casts criticism to the winds and relies upon feminine intuition. Thus, she is never afraid to state in print that no authentic experience lies back of love poems other than her own. Her book reviews are a serious matter, remaining long in the process of elucubration, and becoming on publication subjects of respectful comment among her admiring friends. She is inclined to the opinion that once she has reviewed an author the last word has been said, and further discussion is useless.

Although she writes but little now in the coterie magazines, she retains her girlish predilection for the young men who edit them, and is guided by them in her appreciation of European literature. In Paris she is a familiar figure in those circles where expatriate genius takes advantage of the

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linguistic innocence of French printers to issue books containing obscenities unprintable in England or America. When she contributes a letter from abroad to an American periodical she displays the requisite recklessness in the misuse of French idiom, and her enthusiasms are strictly those of the little group with which she is in personal contact. A subtle problem is presented by her versions of foreign poetry, since it is not always possible to demonstrate that what passes for poetic license is really ignorance of the original. She relies, in such cases, upon her charm, and upon the affecting habit which so many reviewers adopt of declaring the excellence of a translation, although unacquainted with the language from which it is made.

When measured in those years which, it seems, "like great black oxen tread the world" where men of letters labor, her career has been as vertiginously rapid as the beat of passion in her poetry. But they have been years of plenty, of experiences so plentiful that she constantly vows her incapacity to remember them. Perhaps the skeptic might suggest that quality rather than quantity would have been the best mnemonic, but the insinuation is comparable only to the brushing of a clumsy thumb across the wings of a butterfly. She herself realizes that her life has been too crowded for measurement by ordinary standards. And so she has learned to become gradually a little more aloof, less of a private delight and more of a public personage, already almost legendary. Even the professors now mention her quite casually as the greatest figure of her generation, and broadcasting stations transmit her poems, as naturally as if they were the words of a politician or the report of a boxing match. Men now older than when they first bade her to discourse for their enchantment persuade themselves that they were glamoured not by youth but by genius. Her marriage is spoken of with a mingling of relief and admiration at so bold a stroke.

The literary lady is nothing if she is not a woman. She has abandoned the chilling tradition of late Victorian feminism, and is rapidly cured of her early affectation of clothing more masculine than feminine in its outline and texture. Naturally, the permanent acquisition of the male is by no means absent from her designs, although postponed until the move is the inevitable and the only thing to do. If she has left anywhere on the road behind her some mute and inglorious first husband, he is properly pilloried in a ruthless novel of degraded domesticity. The man of destiny is more fortunate in being a later and more premeditated choice. She selects him usually from some walk in life as remote as possible from the hectic world of the arts. He has the solid virtues, the traditions broadening down from bank account to bank account, which are a guarantee of such security as is compatible with the artistic temperament. That is to say, his wife must be secure, not he. His fate is to be a member of that inverted Lucy Stone League of whose members it is said: "Oh, that is the husband of Miss So and So." When the worst comes to the worst, as it sometimes does, for change is the essence of her existence, then he has, at least, the satisfaction of obtaining a form of publicity undreamed of in the philosophy of his business friends. He gets on the front page of the newspapers, without an oil stain on his character.

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TO SEE OR NOT TO SEE

By David Carb

PLAYS IN NEW YORK WORTH SEEING

1. CYRANO DE BERGERAC: *Brian Hooker's exquisite translation of Rostand's masterpiece gives Walter Hampden the chance to prove himself a superb actor.*

2. THE MIRACLE: *Spectacular pageantry in its most elaborate form.*

3. SAINT JOAN: *One of Shaw's best plays, beautifully presented.*

4. THE SWAN: *Rapid fire historical comedy, acted with intelligence and grace.*

5. THE MERRY WIVES OF GOTHAM: *A costume comedy melodrama of Irish persuasion in which Grace George and Laura Hope Crews are charming.* FASHION, *a revival of Mrs. Mowatt's play, is severely of the nineteenth century and one of the treats of the season. (Reviewed below.)*

6. THE SHOW-OFF: *A deft comedy expressing the American point of view. (Reviewed below.)*

7. RAIN: *This mixture of sex and religion still holds sway, with* TARNISH, WHITE CARGO, *and the fine* HELL-BENT FER HEAVEN *following suit.*

8. BEGGAR ON HORSEBACK: *Excellent fantastic comedy aided by exquisite pantomime and music. (Reviewed below.)*

9. THE NERVOUS WRECK: *If you enjoy farce — here is a first class one.*

10. KID BOOTS *and* ANDRE CHARLOT'S REVUE *as musical entertainment cannot be matched.* POPPY, LOLLIPOP, *and* MR. BATTLING BUTLER *are also vastly amusing, while* STEPPING STONES *and* THE MUSIC BOX REVUE *are spectacular and pleasing.*

MARC CONNELLY is reputed to have advised an aspiring dramatist: "If you have written a good first act and a bad last act, go back and rewrite your first act." Mr. Connelly, like so many sages, has neglected to practise what he has preached. In the second of the two acts of "Beggar on Horseback", the current play which he wrote with George S. Kaufman, a pantomime is interpolated which in conception, acting direction, and music is so exquisite that it makes the play seem somewhat flat — or at least unimportant. What, up to the time of the pantomime, had been a gay, resourceful, and brisk fantasy becomes a rather dim background for the scenario and music of Deems Taylor and the delicate expressive Watteau grace of Grethe Ruzt-Nissen.

But disregarding the extraneous and too beautiful pantomime, "Beggar on Horseback" is one of the most diverting plays of the season. As a dream play it lacks the insequence of dreams; as a satire it is perhaps a

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little inclined to the Sinclair Lewis or sledge hammer method, but as an entertainment it is unsurpassed in the New York theatre. Roland Young plays the hero, Neil McRae, with ease and grace. The scene in which he enters the gorgeous mansion of the Crœsus whose daughter he dreams he has married, and finds himself completely surrounded by butlers even more automatic than real butlers, is hilarious.

The second act of "The Chiffon Girl" opens with a dozen or so maid-servants dusting the furniture. But the librettist uses the multiplicity of servants without humor; indeed, there is not a comic line or situation in the entire "book". There is one laugh — when the chorus men suddenly sang "Chif*fon*, chif*fon*", the audience could not restrain its mirth. Eleanor Painter has a pleasing voice and no control over her hands, her arms, or her body.

Kenneth Macgowan, Robert Edmond Jones, and Eugene O'Neill have revived, at the Provincetown Playhouse, a success of 1845 by Anna Cora Mowatt, America's first woman playwright, with songs of the period. The footlights, hidden behind tin reflectors, are lighted, the two piece orchestra plays "I Dreamt that I Dwelt in Marble Halls", the enlarged sentimental valentine curtain rolls up, and Mary Blair as a frisky French maid dusts the chairs painted on the "flats", the while she tells the negro manservant all we need to know about the Tiffany family. Then the plot is allowed to enter.

It is rather startling to encounter so many of the ingredients of contemporary drama in this eighty year old play: the lady who must be elegant on the Paris model even though it ruins her husband, the young heroine who is always as virtuous as Kiki is in a single line of Mr. Belasco's version of the French play, the hero of the Great Open Spaces (in this case, the frontier), the wicked foreigner, the unscrupulous city chap, and the incorruptible, wise and benevolent man from the country (grandfather of so many of Winchell Smith's characters); the ballroom scene, the bedroom scene (only in the more refined days of 1845 a sewing machine stood where Mr. Woods would place the bed and the Perilous Chamber was delicately referred to as "The Dark Room"); and a halfwit of the St. John Ervine sort who listens to what is said on the stage and reveals what is happening offstage. There is even something suggestive of "The Swan" and various other contemporary plays in Mrs. Tiffany's efforts to marry her daughter to a title.

The piece is directed with care and feeling and, on the whole, well cast. Clare Eames as Mrs. Tiffany, Mary Blair as Millinette, Helen Freeman as Seraphina, and Stanley Howlett as Count Jolimaitre are a little too conscious that the play is comedy, and somewhat fearful that the people out front won't realize it; Romeyn Benjamin as Mr. Tiffany and Ruza Wenclawska as Prudence are very bad indeed; but Allen W. Nagle as Snobson, Charles Ellis as the drawing room poet, Perry Ivins as Adam Trueman (the man from the country with a heart of gold), Mary Morris as the virtuous Gertrude, and Walter Abel as the impeccable Colonel Howard, play most convincingly. Miss Morris and Mr. Abel are excellent — only they in the cast seem to know that comedy, as well as tragedy, requires great seriousness; that the more the man who is kicked appears to suffer the funnier he becomes.

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It is doubtful if audiences have ever enjoyed a performance more. They hiss the villains, cheer the virtuous, leave the theatre singing "Call me pet names, dear, call me a bird", and come in numbers to the little hall in Macdougal Street. A good time is had by all, just as a good time was had by all the few who ventured down to Sheridan Square a couple of years ago to see "The Beggar's Opera".

"The Goose Hangs High" is a defense of the much deplored younger generation. Lewis Beach, the author, maintains that the youngsters of the present time are not unlike the youngsters of other times — more thoughtless, perhaps, more assertive, but when the need comes they rise to responsibility as their parents did in their youthtime. And they respond to it with gusto and initiative and generosity; they "shoot the works", "go the whole hog" — or whatever the current phrase for the good gambler and good sport may be. Furthermore, they are not merely sympathetic; they do things.

For two acts "The Goose Hangs High" is vigorous and effective comedy. The careless selfishness of the children is portrayed with sympathetic understanding, the scene in which they return from college for the Christmas holiday has a touch of Barrie in it. The third act is disappointing. We are shown at the second curtain how the children react to their father's failure and the sacrifices it imposes on them. After that there is nothing more to tell.

Norman Trevor, departing from his usual rôle of suave, polished, mundane middle age, gives a sincere impersonation of Bernard Ingals, the father; Katherine Grey, as his wife, is tender and not too sweet. Miriam Doyle is the most convincing flapper of the season, and Eric Dressler is a manly and forceful juvenile. Mrs. Thomas Whiffen plays the grandmother with her usual skill and grace.

When Jane Cowl appeared as Juliet last season it became "the thing" to speak of her as our foremost actress. For a while, after her ill fated per-

THE DRAMA SHELF

"Three Plays of A. V. Lunacharski" translated by L. A. Magnus and K. Walter (Dutton). Rather involved dramas published here as a part of the excellent "Broadway Translations" series.

"Indiana Prize Plays" (Bobbs-Merrill). A group of fairly actable one act plays as presented by the Little Theatre Society of Indiana.

"In the Grip of Life" by Knut Hamsun (Knopf). A powerful but extremely unpleasant story of an aging neurotic woman.

"Max Reinhardt and His Theatre" edited by Oliver M. Sayler (Brentano). A richly illustrated tribute to the great Austrian producer, with informative and appreciative articles containing much data concerning the theatre.

"Via Vitae" by A Sister of Charity (London: Humphrey Milford). A reverent little fantasy in conventional verse.

"The Lady of Belmont" by St. John G. Ervine (Macmillan). A humorous sequel to "The Merchant of Venice" which might have been very funny.

"The Way Things Happen" by Clemence Dane (Macmillan). A rather conventional play by the gifted author of "A Bill of Divorcement".

"Husbands and Lovers" by Franz Molnar (Boni, Liveright). Light dialogues and sketches of Viennese life by this deft craftsman.

"The Wander Weed" by Elia W. Peattie (Sergel). Eight dialogue plays written with honesty and some force.

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formance of Mélisande, it seemed as though her pedestal had crumbled; but, if we are to believe some of the critics of the daily papers, she had merely stepped down for a time, like a goddess making an excursion to the foot of Olympus, has now remounted, and her Cleopatra is "one of the notable performances of the year". An evening at "Antony and Cleopatra" is not satisfactory, but Rollo Peters and William Shakespeare are blamed for that. Peters, we are told, is not a good Antony, and Shakespeare, although he has written some fine plays, did not succeed with "As You Like It" and "Antony and Cleopatra". To all of which we agree. The latter play, especially the version which Miss Cowl has chosen, is scattered and lacking in tragic cumulativeness. But we do not attribute all the blame to the dramatist. Part of the fault lies in the method of production — constantly shifting scenery and long waits between shifts will prevent nearly any play from "building". Had Peters, in his capacity of scene designer, contrived a set that could by slight rearrangements indicate different places — such a set, for example, as Robert Edmond Jones made for Barrymore's "Richard the Third", the action of the tragedy would undoubtedly have been more consecutive and climactic, as it is when read. And had the Antony and the Cleopatra of this production been able to convince us that theirs was a passion which could not be denied even though it splintered the world, we should have felt the pity and the terror of great tragedy. But we never felt those emotions. Peters, an admirable Romeo, was an acting Antony, and Miss Cowl's Queen of Egypt was not always regal nor was she often the siren which the text calls her. There was no big gesture, and the rôle is of heroic dimensions. One could comprehend this Cleopatra's power over men, for her beauty would conquer a Cæsar or an Antony of any time, but it was difficult to detect the passion which ruined an empire. More than difficult — impossible. Therein lies the shortcoming of a notable production.

The New York theatre is probably the most alive, alert, experimental, and varied in the world. Even in so brief a review as this, covering a few of the plays of the past month, the range is remarkable. A dream fantasy, a drama three generations old, a tragedy three centuries old, a comedy of the youth of our own time and middle west, and finally a study of certain American traits and propensities in a lower middle class milieu. And they are all successful! There is a large audience in New York for every kind of play, so long as it is interesting and well done. That cannot be said of any other capital. Our audiences are quite as experimental as our managers and dramatists. They are now making "The Show-Off" a great popular success.

Yet "The Show-Off" violates some of the first rules of the game. There is no character development! The protagonist remains at the end what he was in the beginning, and must always be. It required courage and deep conviction on the part of George Kelly, the author, not to have him "grow", "develop", "awake". That, heretofore, has been a dogma of the theatre. But Aubrey Piper is merely revealed to us — a man with all the tendencies, mannerisms, and preoccupations of the booster and go-getter without the push. Aubrey Piper is the success hero of "The American Magazine" with the last few paragraphs omitted.

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A comedy which delineated only Aubrey Piper would be valuable, especially as played by Louis John Bartels whose laugh made him famous before he appeared on the stage. But "The Show-Off" contributes far more than that to indigenous American drama. There are nine characters, all but two clearly defined. The mother, excellently played by Helen Lowell, is just as true, if not so novel, as Aubrey Piper — the aging woman disillusioned by hardship, sharp yet tender in an unsentimental way, who says, "Every sweater I start I swear it'll be the last." And you know that although she would assert "If they want sweaters let 'em knit them", she will go on knitting sweaters to the end. The minor characters are no less real.

But Mr. Kelly has done more than reveal a group of vital characters; he has made those characters part of the tapestry which we recognize at once as the background of our life. "The First Year", of the same genre, expressed the American sense of humor; "The Show-Off" expresses as nearly as may be the American point of view.

OUTSTANDING MOTION PICTURES

1. THE COVERED WAGON: *This picturization of Emerson Hough's novel is filled with majesty of scenery and real drama.*

2. WILD ORANGES: *Joseph Hergesheimer's story presented with something like perfection. (To be reviewed next month.)*

3. A WOMAN OF PARIS: *Charles Chaplin's direction of this film still remains the most subtle piece of motion picture craftsmanship of the year.*

4. THE MARRIAGE CIRCLE: *A continental tone in a picture which is distinguished and well rounded and of the same genre as "A Woman of Paris".*

5. AMERICA: SERIES ONE — THE SACRIFICE: *D. W. Griffith's thrilling Revolutionary spectacle which has moments of great theatrical power. (Reviewed below.)*

IN "AMERICA", D. W. Griffith's picture of Revolutionary days, there is much that is beautiful, much that is impressive, much that is thrilling, and much that is annoying. You can scarcely afford to miss this picture, with its magnificent midnight ride of Paul Revere, its pictures of George Washington, its engaging hero, and its rather terrifying villain. Mr. Griffith has made a picture which is exceedingly uneven, which is jerky, perhaps because it covers so great a period, and which, in its final scenes, gargantuan in proportions, somehow misses for me the necessary, or at least intended, gargantuan thrill. However, there is much to recommend it, and with the exception of several overdrawn scenes of torture it is in extraordinarily good taste.

Richard Barthelmess has never been more thoroughly charming than he appears in "Twenty-One", a very inconsequential story of a rich boy who falls in love with a poor girl, leaves his family, becomes a taxi driver, and marries the girl. I am inclined to think that metropolitan critics should be taken to task for their annoyance at this film. While it may not have much appeal to the

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sophisticated, to all those to whom young love is both appealing and amusing this picture should prove more than usually delightful.

Marion Davies in "Yolanda" does the best acting of her screen career, to no avail. The scenery and costumes are superb; the direction is not greatly at fault; but there is no story; therefore, the picture is a dull one.

To several shorter films, I urge you: i. e., a series called "Secrets of Life", in which various insects perform under the microscope in a most engaging manner; to Billy Sullivan in the new "Leather Pushers" series; and to "Wilderness Tales", directed by Robert Bruce, character sketches with backgrounds of beautiful scenery.

—*J. F.*

THE OLD POET'S PROTEST*

By Henrietta Jewett Keith

WHAT! Only the sad, black gown,
And the bonnet, stringed and bordered!—
I, with the hair of brown,
Shining and softly ordered.

Put off my gown of blue,
And my silken hose and shoon,
Because, forsooth, you and *you*
Grow old and grey too soon?

And what of the spirit's fire,
Through the cold rains still burning;
The surge of life's desire,
With every spring returning?

Shall the harp lie unstrung?
Pour forth nor joy nor sorrow—
The poet's song unsung,
That from the heart I borrow?

Can tale of years make age?
The flame lack oil, if youth
Swing not the lamp . . . O Sage
Dost thou indeed speak truth?

Oh youth—sweet youth—thou'rt fled;
But leave, to soothe my pain,
Part of your brightness, shed;
For, dyed with rose and flame,
The afterglows are spread.

*"Poets should be killed at twenty six"—Mencken.

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THE BOOKMAN'S GUIDE TO FICTION

THE BOOKMAN *will present each month tabloid reviews of a selected list of recent fiction. This section will include also the books most in demand according to the current reports in "Books of the Month", compiled by the R. R. Bowker Company, The Baker and Taylor Company's "Retail Bookseller", and* "THE BOOKMAN'S *Monthly Score". Such books as the editor especially recommends are marked with a star.*

SIEGE—Samuel Hopkins Adams—*Boni, Liveright.* Youth besieges Family entrenched — it's no disparagement to say that a novel with such a theme has a "Booth Tarkington" ring.

*BLACK OXEN—Gertrude Atherton—*Boni, Liveright.* Rejuvenation and how it behaves in New York society.

JUDD & JUDD—Nalbro Bartley—*Putnam.* An excellent delineation of the difficulties that confront a college trained girl who quits a fine job to marry a classmate.

*RICEYMAN STEPS — Arnold Bennett — *Doran.* Finely presented study of several trying lives within a trying compass.

THE FIR AND THE PALM—Elizabeth Bibesco—*Putnam.* Very dry, about as dry as '78 champagne—and should prove just as pleasing to those with a sophisticated taste.

CRAZY MAN—Maxwell Bodenheim—*Harcourt, Brace.* The plot, which concerns an inarticulate dance palace queen and an altruistic crook, edges its way past quantities of philosophic talk.

THE EAGLE'S WING—B. M. Bower—*Little, Brown.* The stupendous task of damming the Colorado River is described with picturesque detail.

THE HEIGHTS — Marguerite Bryant — *Duffield.* A peculiar tale whose chief interest lies in its transcendentalism.

A GENTLEMAN IN PAJAMAS — Charles Neville Buck—*Century.* A whimsical tale of blackmail and love that makes good but extremely light reading.

YOU TOO—Roger Burlingame—*Scribner.* A novel of youth, love, advertising—readable and a fairly good study in disillusionments.

*A LOST LADY—Willa Cather—*Knopf.* An unusual (the adjective is debatable) woman as seen through her varying love affairs.

THE GASPARDS OF PINE CROFT—Ralph Connor—*Doran.* Two women and two natures find ground for battle around the hero's soul.

*THE ROVER — Joseph Conrad — *Doubleday, Page.* The complicated story of Peyrol, the adventurer, with a background of Napoleonic wars.

TEMPER—Lawrence M. Conrad—*Dodd, Mead.* In this study of the mental development of a factory hand we can almost hear the clang and crash of the steel mills.

THE LAST FRONTIER — Courtney Ryley Cooper—*Little, Brown.* How Custer and Buffalo Bill helped build the Kansas Pacific railroad and break through the last ring of Indians makes an exciting tale.

THE ALASKAN—James Oliver Curwood—*Cosmopolitan.* A ship, Alaska bound, and a reindeer range offer novel background for the usual love and romance with complications.

GOOD HUNTING—Norman Davey—*Doran.* The attempts of six women to capture a man and the success of the seventh.

THE COAST OF FOLLY—Coningsby Dawson—*Cosmopolitan.* A young lady mustn't make eyes at married men—for dreadful things are likely to happen!

HENRY BROCKEN—Walter de la Mare—*Knopf.* The fanciful and romantic adventures of Brocken, a little too prettily told to be de la Mare at his most excellent best.

ONE LITTLE BOY—Hugh de Sélincourt—*Boni.* The beauty of this mother and young son story is enchanting, despite the physical phenomenon of which it speaks.

MADAME CLAIRE—Susan Ertz—*Appleton.* A wisely mellow old lady finds life easy to adjust for those about her.

TWO WOMEN — J. George Frederick — *Brown.* A tale of unbridled passion not enhanced by the manner of its telling.

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FLAMING YOUTH—Warner Fabian—*Boni, Liveright.* A wise gentleman of journalism writes under a pseudonym for his new publishers of the twentieth century girl—and does a wise job.

THE SAFETY PIN—J. S. Fletcher—*Putnam.* Which proves that too many crooks spoil the blackmail but provide an excellent mystery for the reader.

STRAIT IS THE GATE—André Gide—*Knopf.* The story of a girl's immolation of her lover's happiness and her own, told with a brilliant clarity of insight and of style.

THE CALL OF THE CANYON—Zane Grey—*Harper.* Another health seeking, soul building hero, who does both in beautiful Arizona.

THE BLINDNESS OF VIRTUE—Cosmo Hamilton—*Little, Brown.* What a young girl should know, stretched into ten times too many words.

CHILDREN OF THE AGE—Knut Hamsun—*Knopf.* The disintegration of the House of Segelfoss—a brand of iron in a glove of velvet, as one expects from Knut Hamsun.

INNER DARKNESS—Ethelda Daggett Hesser—*Harper.* The Œdipus complex is a dangerous theme for a first novel, but it is here effectively handled.

THE LAST TIME—Robert Hichens—*Doran.* Four novelettes in which jealousy, psychology, love, and humor go through paper hoops.

*THE COVERED WAGON—Emerson Hough—*Appleton.* The romance and hardships of colonization make this saga of the plains commendable.

MOTHER OF GOLD—Emerson Hough—*Appleton.* A good story of adventure in Mexico, and the hunt for a treasure that would make Kidd himself feel like very little apples.

*LUMMOX—Fannie Hurst—*Harper.* New York life as viewed by a strange, unexpressed, groping servant girl.

THE STEADFAST HEART—Clarence Budington Kelland—*Harper.* Angus Burke struggles through to a glorious finish—a perfect hero indulging in perfect heroism.

THE SEA—Bernard Kellermann—*McBride.* Love and fishermen's battles—both at the mercy of the waves—vividly pictured.

THE HAPPY ISLES—Basil King—*Harper.* A charming boy goes gaily through a most erratic life—part of the time guided by an equally charming burglar.

BROKEN BUTTERFLIES—Henry Walsworth Kinney—*Little, Brown.* A born monogamist tries to adapt himself to the easy social conventions of Japan. Interesting even though it is politically instructive.

NEVER THE TWAIN SHALL MEET—Peter B. Kyne—*Cosmopolitan.* What a South Sea Island vampire does to a respectable business man.

*DOCTOR NYE—Joseph C. Lincoln—*Appleton.* A poor misunderstood lovable doctor at the mercy of a typical Lincoln community.

THE LENGTHENED SHADOW—William J. Locke—*Dodd, Mead.* An heiress, confronted by a strange choice of husbands, finds her hero.

TOLD BY AN IDIOT—Rose Macaulay—*Boni, Liveright.* In which the author of "Potterism", with the aid of a sledge hammer, sets forth the theory that one age is like another and there is nothing new under the sun.

MOLESKIN JOE—Patrick MacGill—*Harper.* A melodramatic motion picture of a gang of "navvies" has been cleverly novelized.

SUMMERTIME—Denis Mackail—*Houghton Mifflin.* A tale of young love whose lively dialogue justifies its existence.

THE PARSON'S PROGRESS—Compton Mackenzie—*Doran.* In this, the second novel of a trilogy, the excitement grows intense. Will Mark Lidderdale be using a red or a green chasuble in the concluding volume?

*BUDDENBROOKS—Thomas Mann—*Knopf.* An extraordinary study of a German family.

THE PLASTIC AGE—Percy Marks—*Century.* A faithful presentation of a representative undergraduate's four years.

VINDICATION—Stephen McKenna—*Little, Brown.* Rather outrageous people behaving delightfully.

ARE PARENTS PEOPLE?—Alice Duer Miller—*Dodd, Mead.* Mrs. Miller's familiar combination of captivating flapper, engaging youth, and snappy dialogue makes an agreeably frothy mouthful.

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A HIND LET LOOSE—C. E. Montague—*Doubleday, Page.* One Irishman wrote the mutually recriminatory editorials of two British newspapers. But the real fun began *after* he was unmasked.

*BREAD—Charles G. Norris—*Dutton.* The attitude of the conservative young working girl toward life, marriage, and her job.

BUTTERFLY — Kathleen Norris — *Doubleday, Page.* The temperamental Butterfly and her capable sister form contrasting protagonists in a story of musical talent and the social whirl.

SOULS IN HELL—John O'Neill—*Brown.* As long as the author sticks to his main theme, spiritualism and occultism, his knowledge of the subjects at least compels respect.

MICHAEL'S EVIL DEEDS—E. Phillips Oppenheim—*Little, Brown.* An interesting villain and a fascinating detective, matched.

ANNIHILATION — Isabel Ostrander — *McBride.* McCarthy, ex-policeman, and his friend Denny the fireman, triumphantly solve another ingenious mystery.

THE DARK SWAN—Ernest Pascal—*Brentano.* A splendid achievement on the author's part. Though the book is decidedly unconventional, it is far too sincere to be termed merely risqué.

A SIMPLE STORY—Charles-Louis Philippe—*Knopf.* Those who read for the sake of scintillating style and effective character studies can hardly afford to miss this sombre narrative of a French peasant's life and death.

CHEAT-THE-BOYS—Eden Phillpotts—*Macmillan.* The tragic story of a "lovely love-taster", in Phillpotts's Devonshire setting.

THE WHITE FLAG—Gene Stratton-Porter—*Doubleday, Page.* A somewhat historical novel, with a touch of symbolism and a most complicated plot.

THE BOOK OF BLANCHE—Dorothy Richardson—*Little, Brown.* Though spotted with mediocrity, this story of doctor and patient love is on the whole real and absorbing.

STAIRWAY OF THE SUN—Robert Welles Ritchie—*Dodd, Mead.* The pathos of mixed blood in Hawaii is treated with poignant sympathy.

FORTUNE'S FOOL — Rafael Sabatini — *Houghton Mifflin.* Theatrical life and life (as the drama portrays it) make another historical novel of little reality and much charm.

MOCK MAJESTY — E. W. Savi — *Putnam.* Life in India, with its intrigue, mystery, and lure, realistically portrayed.

*A CURE OF SOULS—May Sinclair—*Macmillan.* Another godless preacher—painted with a fine ironic brush. *(See page 210.)*

THE GARDEN OF PERIL—Cynthia Stockley—*Putnam.* A struggle between ambition and love in South Africa is related with power and insight.

*THE MIDLANDER—Booth Tarkington—*Doubleday, Page.* How a man lost his soul and love in the development of a great middle western town.

TREVE—Albert Payson Terhune—*Doran.* Again the tale wags the dog.

THE LONG WALK OF SAMBA DIOUF—Jerome and Jean Tharaud—*Duffield.* A Senegalese Negro serves on the western front. The story is told from the African's viewpoint.

THE SCARLET IRIS — Vance Thompson — *Bobbs-Merrill.* The author draws no red herring across the track, but he certainly does lay a wicked trail for detective story hounds to follow.

THE FURTHEST FURY — Carolyn Wells — *Lippincott.* Carefully plotted, cleverly unraveled double murder mystery.

*A SON AT THE FRONT—Edith Wharton—*Scribner.* The war as it affects the lives of those back of the front. Exquisite portraiture.

*OH, DOCTOR!—Harry Leon Wilson—*Cosmopolitan.* Hypochondria used to make a rollicking farce novel.

*THE ABLE MCLAUGHLINS — Margaret Wilson—*Harper.* An able melodrama ably disguised with trappings of the Sixties in midwest America.

THE MINE WITH THE IRON DOOR—Harold Bell Wright—*Appleton.* A complicated plot involving Indians and a lady's virtue proves that desire for gold isn't the thing.

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THE EDITOR RECOMMENDS—

The Comfortable Church

ALL these novels about easeful clergyman with bread and butter souls are very well; but to us in America, it seems to me, they come a trifle late. Our church is at the moment so militant, torn within itself and without, that I fear the Canon Chamberlains would have small chance of many quiet afternoon teas. However, "A Cure of Souls" (Macmillan) is deeper than portraiture of the clergy. It is a painfully clever picture of negative selfishness the world over. Here is a genial, quiet gentleman who is fond of the world but does not wish to be disturbed by it. If he had been a Harold Bell Wright character he would have found his soul; but he is not a figure of struggle or bravado. He resists all attempts to break through his wall of peace. He is successfully quiet and quietly successful. At the close of the story he is even more peaceful than at the beginning, and has found a comfortably peaceful wife. May Sinclair writes these days with almost a vicious pen under her exterior of sparse paragraphs. A most uncomfortable book, this, all in all; but an exceedingly clever one!

Is Publicity a Menace?

EVER since the war the question of the ethics of propaganda has been agitating us. Walter Lippmann's treatise on "Public Opinion" was suggestive but not exhaustive. Now, in a short but remarkably clear study, Edward L. Bernays takes up the practical problems of the propagandist. "Crystallizing Public Opinion" (Boni, Liveright) is a book that every business man, as indeed every artist, should read. In the first place, it is written by one of our most successful practitioners in the art of guiding public opinion, a man who, younger than the famous Ivy Lee, seems yet to partake of that gentleman's genius, or acumen rather, in determining both which way the public will jump and how, on occasion, to assist in the jumping or to avert or shift the jump. It makes little difference what you call the gentleman who undertakes special campaigns through the press; you may call him a public relations counsel or a publicity man. His function is becoming increasingly important in our national and business life. At his worst, his methods may often be questioned; at his best, he is as ethical or more so than the old time advertising manager of the most conservative bank.

Now, here is a wise paragraph:

> Populations have increased. In this country geographical areas have increased. Heterogeneity has also increased. A group living in any given area is now extremely likely to have no common ancestry, no common tradition, as such, and no cohesive intelligence. All these elements make it necessary to-day for the proponent of a point of view to engage an expert to represent him before society, an expert who must know how to reach groups totally dissimilar as to ideals, customs and even language. It is this necessity which has resulted in the development of the counsel on public relations.

All of you who are at all interested in problems of public psychology should read this book.

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Quiet Versifiers

HERVEY ALLEN'S impressive ballad "The Blindman" has been reprinted in a special limited edition (Yale). It remains one of the most striking of our war poems—terrifying in its simple beauty, in its strange significance.

Over against this rugged book, Harold Vinal's "Voyage" (Vinal) comes as a mellow contrast. I had not realized until I read this collection of Mr. Vinal's lyrics what a felicitous versifier he is. His tradition is that of the Greeks, he has a fine ear for delicate rhythms, and his sense of beauty is constant. I am going to quote one sonnet:

SEA WOMEN

Women there are who love the sea like men
Though they are closed in houses day by day:
They want to take a vessel down a bay;
They want to go back to the sea again.
And though they spend their lives in a dull town,
Wearing their days out with the same routine,
Their eyes are hungry for a Barquantine
A vessel or a slow tide going down.

Only the cries of children prick their ears,
The noise of wagons passing up a street;
Never the lap of water under piers,
Never the moan of gulls or the wind's beat.
So they live out their lives behind a door,
Wanting to take to sea and leave the shore.

Katherine Mansfield's poems are not great poems; but they are the fine record of the softer side of a fine personality, and as such they will be read by many who hold dear the memory of this extraordinary, gifted woman. A genre picture like "Night-Scented Stock" shows the Katherine Mansfield of the stories and sketches, while the "Child Verses" have an unusual combination of humor and naïve fantasy. "A Few Rules for Beginners" is surely most poignant:

Babies must not eat the coal
And they must not make grimaces,
Nor in party dresses roll
And must never black their faces.

They must learn that pointing's rude,
They must sit quite still at table,
And must always eat the food
Put before them—if they're able.

If they fall, they must not cry,
Though it's known how painful this is;
No—there's always Mother by
Who will comfort them with kisses.

More Fictional Travel

"MAN and Mystery in Asia" (Dutton) is so colorful a book that it defies belief—yet, somehow, I believe it. After all, wanting to believe is to believe, isn't it? Moreover, no one has successfully disproved any of Ferdinand Ossendowski's statements. On the whole this new book by the author of "Beasts, Men and Gods" is not so good a book as the other, but it is a more exciting book. In this case, violent journalism has been allowed to run away with simplicity in the telling; while the book contains passages of great beauty, it occasionally reads very much like a travel story in a newspaper Sunday supplement. However, this tale of sojourn and scientific exploration in the East has much of the quality of the "Arabian Nights". Take an early chapter titled "Among the Flowers"—here is a description of the poisonous night violet that will live in the memory for some years. Or take a characterization like that of "The Black Monk". It might well be a chapter in a good novel. I recommend this volume heartily to all those who liked "Beasts, Men and Gods", and all those who did not read Ossendowski's first book should read both.

—*J. F.*

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THE BOOK OF THE MONTH

"ULUG BEG"

Reviewed by Gamaliel Bradford

"AUTOLYCUS" has done a big, strong piece of work, worthy to be remembered, and the easy, self contented, frivolous piping of a horde of petty songsters is swept into insignificance by the rude, crude, substantial humanity of this wayward epic.

Let me get rid of a few minor defects, before I expand upon the ample, admirable merits. To begin with, the poem is oriental. To some readers this may not be a defect. Personally I detest the Orient, whether Burton's or Kipling's or "Autolycus's", with its tinsel, its filth, its lechery, its lies. All the same, it is the region of tales *par excellence* and "Ulug Beg" is a tale, and an absorbing one —rough, vigorous, dirty, with a dazzling profusion of incident, but with a constant hurry and change which keep the reader breathless, and always with an anxious query as to what may be coming next. Another weakness lies in the personality of the hero. This is of course deliberate. It was the author's intention to get a profound depth of comic effect by taking a perfectly commonplace figure and having him swept into prominence and eminence by the mere masterful power of events and the dominant control of stronger minds who yet were obliged, through the strange working of fate, to subject their larger destinies to his. The result is no doubt picturesque and impressive; but a commonplace hero is, after all, a danger, and one gets at times from the bewildering whirl something of the suggestion of a tornado with a vacuum in the centre. Also, there appears to me to be unnecessary harshness in the execution. Comic sweep and a dashing gallop in your lines are all very well. Yet in a narrative poem, above all others, a verse should read itself, should not require reperusal; and too many of these verses require to be gone over twice, or even thrice, before one catches the swing the author meant to impart to them.

But this point of form brings us right to one of the many excellences. For telling his story "Autolycus" has resuscitated the octave stanza from a long and undeserved oblivion. As is well known, this is the standard medium of almost all the narrative poetry of the Italian, Spanish, and Portuguese literatures, and the dazzling octaves of Ariosto take full advantage of the rhyming facilities of his mother tongue. The seventeenth century English poets used the ottava rima to some extent, and both Keats and Shelley employed it delightfully. Then Byron, following Frere, turned to it as the vehicle for telling a vast comic story in the scintillating cantos of "Don Juan", and since that time it has been regarded as so completely Byronic property that few poets have cared to meddle with it. For serious

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purposes there is no doubt that such a complicated rhyme form is distracting and disintegrating, and even the genius of Tasso and Camoens was not adequate to telling heroic legends in it with entire success. But for a somewhat rambling, gay, picturesque, highly colored comic narrative, the octave is absolutely unequaled. The rhyme may be made so piquant, varied, and diverting. The final couplet gives such a delightful opportunity for epigram that smacks and lashes like the snap of a whip. The whole movement is so sinuous, so supple, so elaborate, yet so swift and easy to follow. The light dancing stanzas involve and enfold passion and thought and laughter with a garment of grace and gaiety which is endlessly alluring and which, just as you feel that it is about to grow monotonous, develops new resources of variety and ease. Of almost all these resources the author of "Ulug Beg" is splendidly master. The charm of dainty and sinuous grace, as one finds it for instance in Shelley's exquisite "Hymn to Mercury", is perhaps a little lacking. The rough lines I above alluded to are a symptom of this. But the speed of the octave, its sinewy force, its endless possibility of adaptation to any theme, its richness of surprise, all these "Autolycus" has at his command, and he uses them with lavish facility and skill.

The matter of the poem is as rich and varied as the form. I have said the story is oriental. So it is, and I wish it were not. But, after all, humanity is a good deal the same in the Orient as elsewhere. "Autolycus" is perfectly aware of this, and perhaps he bothers himself with Achmets and Zuleikas and Golubyofs merely that he may laugh at the dwellers on Main Street with more security. At any rate, it is evident that when his turbaned personages quarrel and fight and swear and sin and love and hate, he feels that they are doing exactly what the men and women and children who are about him daily are doing in the same monstrous, tempestuous, commonplace way, and with the same futile result. And the angle from which he chooses to survey it all is the comic angle. Either point of view is possible enough, God knows. You may enter into the passion and the horror of men's struggles till your heart is torn to bits. Or you may stand aside and smile at the vast insignificance of it all under the aspect of eternity. There is always the old saying of Horace Walpole: "The world is a comedy to those who think, a tragedy to those who feel." "Autolycus" prefers to confine himself, or to have us believe that he confines himself, to the thinking aspect of the matter, to rank himself with those who have interpreted the universe in terms of laughter rather than of tears. And he can point to a magnificent company behind him: Aristophanes, Plautus, Rabelais, Cervantes, Fielding, Sterne, and certainly a large element of Shakespeare. Only, the comparison with the attitude of Sterne or Shakespeare shows most a certain weakness in the attitude of "Autolycus". His comedy is too bitter, has too much the flavor of satire about it. No one could smile more deeply or more subtly at the follies of men than Shakespeare or Cervantes did; yet the smile always has tenderness at the back of it, always has a large quality of radiance, of sunshine, which dissolves acidity and drives cruelty away.

But I feel sure that another ten years will develop this richness of sunshine in the work of "Autolycus",

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and above all I hope that he will transfer his keen observation, his broad understanding of the human heart, and his glittering octaves from that disgusting Orient right to the United States, to New York or Illinois or California. Never, never was a richer or more fertile world waiting, crying out for treatment by a great comic spirit, than here about us today. The vagaries of our politics, the freaks of our religion, the desperate, commendable gestures of our would be philanthropists, the pranks of money, the frolics of sport, the audacities of journalism, all demand interpretation, not by the slow triviality of a realistic novelist, but by the quick, light, eager touch of one who has the full command of the tinkling lyre of laughter. Above all, there is the American woman. The world has never imagined anything like her, because the world has never before dreamed of giving woman any such opportunity to make herself conspicuous, or ridiculous, and always interesting. And woman is the natural property of the comic poet. Ah, let "Autolycus" leave his Yasmeens and Zuleikas and come over here and make his octaves sparkle with flappers and philanthropists and politicians and shopgirls and all the other gay birds that flaunt and glitter through the hundred cities of this strange, complicated, roaring, rushing, fascinating aggregation of States.

Only let him sign "Touchstone" or "Feste", instead of "Autolycus", for there is more of the Shakespearian sunshine in "As You Like It" than in "A Winter's Tale". Perhaps, indeed, like the other obsessed fanatics, we may peep under the Shakespearian signature altogether and detect or decipher a little bit of Bacon.

Ulug Beg, An Epic Poem, Comic in Intention, in VII Cantos. By "Autolycus". Alfred A. Knopf.

A SHELF OF RECENT BOOKS

HAPPY THOUGH MARRIED

By John E. Lind

OF all the delusions whose flickering flames lure mankind out across the marshes, the most hopeless is the Messianic delusion. A man may have imaginary enemies and forget about them; he may be grandiose and become deflated; but let him once believe that he has a panacea for human ills, and he is lost. The rest of his life must perforce be spent in preaching his doctrines to any audience he can gather.

Dr. Lay's present thesis has to do with marriage, especially with unhappy marriages. By a simple physiological expedient any marriage can be made a happy one; any husband transformed into a perfect knight; and any wife into a composite of Venus, Helen of Troy, and Ann Pennington.

What this magic-working formula is can hardly be told here. Lay perforce uses many circumlocutions and euphemisms to express it. Suffice it to say that it is one known for many years and advocated by Havelock Ellis and many other writers on sex. It is a physiological and psychological truth

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frequently preached in appropriate instances by physicians, but it is only one aspect of matrimony. Surely it is a naïve type of mind which could suggest that in it lies the solution to all conjugal problems. Married people are kittle kattle to shoo behind, as Dr. Lay would find had he any professional experience with them. It is one of the most deadly features of the psychoanalytic doctrines that they imbue all sorts of amateurs with desires to talk about them, or, worse still, to write about them. Some of these boosters of Freudianism have had personal experience with the psychotherapeutic benefits of the method; others merely wax enthusiastic from the printed page. To which class Dr. Lay belongs is not a matter for discussion here. At least, he writes better than most of them, although in his latest book we do stumble across such expressions as this: "so unanimously approved by most erotologists" (page 155).

The book is enormously padded. Necessarily prevented by the censorship from being explicit about his panacea, Professor Lay indulges in endless repetition. Everything in his three hundred pages could have been put with great ease in ten.

One of the handicaps under which he labors is a lack of humor. As a result, some of his material, especially the episode between the middle aged married couple (pages 114-121), is excruciatingly funny.

It would be a very pleasant thing to believe that no matter how ill mated a couple may be, how deficient either of them in beauty, intellect, amiability or charm, they can become deliriously and rapturously happy by the waving of a wand. It would be pleasant also to believe in Santa Claus, Cinderella, and wishing rings. According to Dr. Lay, a woman with dirty neck and finger nails, spading potatoes in a garden, may be just as thrilling as any fair lady of any poet's dream. One may be permitted to elevate the eyebrow? The psychological fact, which has burst upon him like Chapman's Homer upon Keats, is all very well, but it is not the *summum bonum*. The psychoanalyst, after months of study, sometimes ventures to think he understands something about one human being, and is able to advise him about his adjustments to life. The problem is complicated when it is a question of the adjustments of man and wife to each other; and no psychologist worthy of the name would think of laying down any general laws in the matter.

The formulation of any such principle as Lay's has the same relation to psychotherapy that chiropractic has to medicine.

A Plea for Monogamy. By Wilfrid Lay, Ph.D. Boni and Liveright.

MR. CHESTERTON INTERPRETS ST. FRANCIS

By James J. Daly, S. J.

MR. CHESTERTON must have enjoyed the writing of this little book about St. Francis of Assisi. All his prodigious exuberance of mental energy seems to find here congenial conditions for grateful release and exercise. He tells us, by way of apology for his shortcomings as an interpreter of St. Francis, that it takes a saint to write intelligently of a saint. Well, perhaps it does. But it might just as reasonably be maintained that it takes a saint to read intelligently about a saint. If both these proposi-

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tions are equally true, and were to be accepted as practical canons in hagiography, the supply and demand would hardly create anything like a market for books about the saints. Mr. Chesterton has at least one virtue which qualifies him to write about a saint. He is a poet. There is what might be called a high poetic potential in the saints which makes them kin to the poet. Scratch a saint and you will find a poet. The saints are usually so engrossed in pouring their poetry into life that they forget to pour it into art. St. Francis of Assisi happened to let some of his flow over into art.

Mr. Chesterton has another qualification which fits him for the task of explaining the great Umbrian Saint to the modern mind—the type which understands Tolstoy and does not love him, and loves Francis and does not understand him. Mr. Chesterton informs us in a prefatory statement that he addresses himself "to that part of the modern world which finds in St. Francis a certain modern difficulty; which can admire him yet hardly accept him, or which can appreciate the saint almost without the sanctity". And he goes on to say that his only claim to attempt his present task is "that I myself have for so long been in various stages of such a condition. Many thousand things that I now partly comprehend I should have thought utterly incomprehensible, many things I now hold sacred I should have scouted as utterly superstitious, many things that seem to me lucid and enlightened now they are seen from the inside I should honestly have called dark and barbarous seen from the outside, when long ago in those days of boyhood my fancy first caught fire with the glory of Francis of Assisi."

There is no attempt to give a biography. The author wishes to provide an introduction to the life of the Saint, to furnish a commentary on some standard biography like Father Cuthbert's, which may serve to throw the light of a sweet reasonableness over what to many modern minds are eccentricities and disconcerting displays of fanaticism. He rightly insists on the reality of a saint's love of God as the solution of all the modern difficulties about the so called extravagances of the saints. "Critics", he says, "will not believe that a heavenly love can be as real as an earthly love. The moment it is treated as real, like an earthly love, their whole riddle is easily solved." Since science moved us out of our snug mediæval quarters into a more spacious cosmos, we seem to have lost our heads in the stress of a sudden prosperity. The hypothesis that God can love and be loved with a real personal love is about the only hypothesis that does not occur to the mind that calls itself modern. One might suppose that scientific revelations of divine intelligence and power would naturally suggest enlarged ideas of God's love of the individual soul. It is a curious phenomenon that the unrolling of the scroll of God's grandeur, instead of preparing the human mind for corresponding revelations of His love, should lead it only into sweeping denials of His love.

Mr. Chesterton has the moral earnestness of a prophet. If his prophecies are delivered in the lightning flashes of wit and genial humor, without the terrifying accompaniment of thunder, sensitive readers ought to be duly grateful. But we are afraid it is not so. Already the word has been passed that Mr. Chesterton's skill in logic and mastery of words furnish grounds for suspicion rather

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than for confidence. Cardinal Newman suffered similarly for his virtues. As a matter of fact, a false assumption or a slip of memory is more glaring when it glitters than when it is dull. When, for instance, in the present volume Mr. Chesterton, groping about for the nearest peg on which to hang an idea, tells us that "it is a curiosity of language that courage actually means running", we are much more startled than would be the case if anyone but Mr. Chesterton had said it.

St. Francis of Assisi. By Gilbert K. Chesterton. George H. Doran Company. (Modern Readers' Bookshelf Series.)

THE COLLECTED SAINTSBURY

By Henry A. Lappin

FIFTEEN years ago Arnold Bennett, in one of his vivacious "Jacob Tonson" notes in "The New Age", expressed a yearning "to have a large homogeneous body of English literary criticism to read *at*." "I should be obliged", he wrote, "to anyone who would point out to me where such a body of first-rate literary criticism is to be found." Hazlitt, he declared, "didn't know enough." Coleridge? "Well, Coleridge has his comprehensible moments, but they are few." With Lamb, intimates Mr. Bennett, the trouble was that he gave up to the India House what was meant for mankind. Matthew Arnold "with study and discipline might perhaps have been a great critic"; unhappily, poor Matthew was "provincial". Turning to survey with baleful eye the ranks of contemporary practitioners of the art, the commentator observes with frigid finality that he has "no hesitation in declassing the whole professorial squad — Bradley, Herford, Dowden, Walter Raleigh, Elton, and Saintsbury." The critical gods of Mr. Bennett's idolatry, it is conveyed, are Pierre Bayle, Sainte-Beuve, and Taine, and we are to infer that his dissatisfaction with their English brethren of the craft is the fruit of exquisitely laborious hours devoted by him to "the voluminous and consistently admirable works" of these astonishing Frenchmen. The author of "Literary Taste and How to Acquire It" unhesitatingly shutting the gates of mercy on Hazlitt, Coleridge, Arnold, and Company—what a theme for the pencil of Max!

Mr. Bennett gravely disapproves of Professor Saintsbury. Indeed he pronounces a major excommunication against him because of his style. George Saintsbury's prose, to be sure, is no more impeccable than Arnold Bennett's. On the whole, it would be unwise to prescribe the Saintsbury style as a model for youthful aspirants to distinction in the other harmony. One must accustom oneself to the Saintsbury weakness for parentheses and for the piling of clause upon clause. And the neophyte will have difficulty at first in appreciating his author's indulgence in remote and obscure allusion. Yet, in the mass, this prose convinces, and a prolonged attention to Professor Saintsbury's writing will make it clear that his style is a unique personal instrument of expression, extraordinarily animated and persuasive. Indeed in the best pages of these volumes his English overflows with life and not seldom rises to a height of glowing imaginative eloquence.

Almost everything here has already appeared in print. This collection, however, harvests and renders easily accessible nearly all the significant

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minor criticism which has come from the veteran's pen in the last five and forty years. We miss the brilliant and comprehensive Britannica article on Madame de Sévigné, quite the best general introduction in English to its subject. May we hope for its inclusion in the volume of French essays at the forthcoming publication of which the preface hints? And where is the delightful essay on Longfellow —of all brief treatments of this poet the freshest and most discriminating —which was originally published as an introduction to the "Selections" in the "Golden Poets" series?

There is hardly space here to do more than indicate the contents of this collected edition. The first volume contains appreciations and criticisms of Crabbe, Hogg, Sydney Smith, Jeffreys, Hazlitt, Moore, Leigh Hunt, De Quincey, Southey, Cobbett, Susan Ferrier, and Fanny Burney; of Lockhart, Praed, Borrow, Peacock, Landor, Hood, and his half forgotten fellow humorists Hook, Barham, and Maginn. In the second volume are reprinted the contents of "Corrected Impressions", which contains the critic's ultimate verdicts upon the major Victorians. Here also is reprinted the remarkable study of Trollope's entire work, recently contributed to an English Association volume. This division of the collection provides the advocate of the Victorians with a veritable arsenal of weapons for their defense. Volume the third assembles a variety of discourses upon such subjects as "The Historical Novel", "Modern English Prose", and "The Cookery of Grouse and Partridge". The two jewels of this volume are the papers on "The Permanent and the Temporary in Literature" and "Twenty Years of Reviewing". The latter should provide the jaded reviewer with a new lease of vitality for the prosecution of his uneasy trade. If Mr. Bennett still hungers and thirsts after "a large homogeneous body etc.", here it is, Saintsbury's Plenty!

The man whose splendid passion for his art and unremitting industry in the practice of it has filled these twelve hundred pages, written, as it were, "in the intervals of business", is as English as one of Trollope's or Marshall's clayey squires. One must therefore make lenient and good humored allowance for his John Bullish prejudices. His spiritual independence is as resolute and sturdy as that of Cobbett or Hazlitt; and more than any English critic he resembles Hazlitt in pertinacity of judgment and decisive insight. Behind every sentence from his pen, as from Hazlitt's, we feel the throb of a personal energy. Yet his critical range is wider than that of any English book taster past or present. His massive learning and manysided sensibility compel our veneration hardly less than the intellectual vigor of appreciation which has constantly urged him to draw out the soul and truth from book after book throughout the whole territory of half a dozen literatures, ancient and modern. As far removed from pedantry as far from dilettantism, he has concerned himself for fifty years with the details of literary investigation, and his accuracy has never once degenerated into pettiness. In truth no living critic has communicated a more contagious enthusiasm for what is noble in great literature and great men.

In the essay on Lockhart our author has set forth, as follows, the characteristics which are most wanting in criticism, biographical and literary, at the present day: " . . sobriety of

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style and reserve of feeling, coupled with delicacy of intellectual appreciation and æsthetic sympathy, a strong and firm creed in matters political and literary, not excluding that catholicity of judgment which men of strong belief frequently lack, and, above all the faculty of writing like a gentleman without writing like a mere gentleman." As an enumeration of the merits of George Saintsbury himself this could not be bettered.

The Collected Essays and Papers of George Saintsbury, 1875—1920. Three volumes. E. P. Dutton and Co.

STRAINED INTENSITIES

By Louis Untermeyer

NOTHING in recent literature is more remarkable than the suddenness of the swing from a romantic realism to a calculated æstheticism. Distrustful of the value of human relations, of experience, of life itself, many of the younger — and, let it be admitted — singularly gifted poets have sought escape not merely in art but in an obscure and circumscribed approach to it. The vigor, the direct regard, the passionate concern have been sacrificed for a tired evasion, for a preoccupation with the superficials of form and structure. What, in the major artist, is a powerful devotion becomes a pale detachment; the æsthete of 1924 observes a bleeding world only to study the colors of its bruises. In a recent number of "The Freeman" John Gould Fletcher, who with "H. D." and Amy Lowell made Imagism famous, adds a valuable postscript to this revival of æstheticism. Sorrowfully, he concludes, "Whether this state of affairs has resulted from the European war, or whether the Imagists with their blind dislike of didacticism have been mainly responsible, future historians will have to decide. What is certain is that . . . many of the poets of the present day are proudly displaying all the signs of a premature senility."

But even more apparent than this æsthetic disillusion is the sense of strain by which many of these artists achieve their effects. Instead of a natural individuality of speech — the verbal ease which has not prevented men like Frost and Lindsay and Sandburg from commanding their own distinguishing idioms — we have a presentation of distorted nouns and verbs, eruptive particles, and (is not even the comma sacred to this generation?) tortured punctuation. E. E. Cummings, who has enlivened various issues of "The Dial" with his peculiar patterns, is easily the most interesting of his type. His is a mind which is, in quick succession, witty, lyrical, fantastic, grotesque, pathetic, savage. Even in the verses which, like "Orientale", are obviously a hang over if not a record preserved from imitative adolescence, one discerns a richly distributed imagination. But even more evident than the poetry is the strain. A phrase, sufficiently interesting in itself — "I was considering how, within night's loose sack, a star's nibbling infinitesimally devours darkness" — appears on the printed page as:

i was considering how
within night's loose
sack a star's
nibbling in-

fin
-i-
tes-
i
-mal-
ly devours

darkness

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And, in one of Cummings's merely pretty pictures, the charming cadence ("a tall wind is dragging the sea with dreams") is spaced in this pretentious manner:

a tall
wind
is dragging
the
sea

with

dream

-S

Why, one inquires, such distortions? Why in an otherwise smoothly flowing line, the incongruous attenuation, the absurdity of the disjointed capital, the emphasizing of arbitrary syllables to the destruction of the inner pattern? Are the phrases, in themselves, not provocative enough? Mr. Cummings's fellow Secessionist, Gorham B. Munson, supplies the answer. "Most writers could profitably take lessons in arresting attention from American advertising experts. And American advertising experts can take lessons from Cummings." But it is precisely when Cummings is least interested in arresting attention by visual eccentricities that he is most himself. The accents of Sandburg and Eliot persist, unstrangled by the malformed calligrams, in Cummings's disorganized advertisements. Where the poet feels he can afford to be typographically conventional, he sings with a clean and distinct voice. The high notes of the volume are certain of the sonnets, several of the love songs, and the delightfully archaic "Puella Mea" — all of which are as much the product of yesterday as they seem. Mr. Cummings's orthodox couplets remain couplets, even though he wedges white paper between them, and his catalogue of his lady's charms loses nothing by appearing in a form as regular as Villon's.

Apart from his typographical tricks, this poet communicates a genuine if disintegrated lyricism. It would be a pity if the irritation aroused by Cummings's delivery were to render the reader deaf to phrases as persuasive as, "Thy fingers make early flowers of all things", "the bulge and nuzzle of the sea", "thy mouth is a chord of crimson music", "thy forehead is a flight of flowers", "In the street of the sky, night walks scattering poems", "thoughts more white than wool". It would be, I repeat, a pity if Cummings's natural grace were disregarded because of his attitudinizing. For the author of "Tulips and Chimneys" is a curiously whimsical, even a sentimental lyricist, although he tries to disguise the fact by shouting his songs in a syncopated staccato, punctuating the syllables with a cracked tambourine.

The jacket of Maxwell Bodenheim's new volume startles one by its critical acumen: "His poems never sing and rarely charm, but they stab with a blackguard sincerity." If the blurb writer is to turn honest, there will be no need for the reviewer and the millenium may be expected at any moment! Beyond the accuracy of the quoted sentence, there remains chiefly a record of exaggerated intensity through forced associations. One has a picture of Bodenheim as ring master, cracking his savage whip over the heads of cowering adjectives and recalcitrant nouns, compelling them to leap in grotesque and unwilling pairs over the fantastically piled barriers of his imagination. It is a good show — particularly for those who have not seen it too often. But

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to those who have observed the development of Bodenheim's performances, there is insufficient variety to his program. His verbal couples trot through their accustomed paces with the same expression of mutual distrust and the ring master himself begins to grow tedious. He is still — if I may take my metaphor out of the circus — the sardonic euphuist; his irony leaps, with fascinating transilience, from one image to another. But, after completely mastering his technique, he has become a slave to it. He is no longer guilty of figures as absurd as the earlier address to "Track-Workers", in which the perspiring laborers with "yellow spit raining down their faces" were called "the living cuspidors of day"! But, for all his intellectual alertness, the total effect is an acrobatic monotony; what started as a manner is degenerating into a mannerism.

The spirit in which Bodenheim's later work is written may have something to do with the reader's eventual resentment. Most of this poetry is written not out of love but out of hate. Or, if not out of hate, out of suspicion, anger, scorn. It is, at least, an aptly named volume that Bodenheim flings at the public. It is not only "Against This Age" but, in its supercilious disdain, against the reader.

In D. H. Lawrence's intensity, the strain is the result of a too torrential rather than an overintellectual passion. It is a lack of restraint, an absence of æsthetic control, that permits him to use his gifts so prodigally — and often, one regretfully observes, so wastefully. Technically, there is scarcely one satisfying poem in "Birds, Beasts and Flowers", although there are half a dozen that almost achieve greatness. This approximation appears to satisfy Lawrence; he seems little interested in the perfection of image, the condensation of phrase, the final clarity which is the function of art. In fact, it is as an artist that Lawrence is incomprehensible. It is difficult to understand how a craftsman so critical of the deficiencies of others can be so wholly uncritical of his own untempered, slag covered and half finished work. The communication of emotion, the almost physical force are evidently enough for Lawrence. He is, today, so little of the conscientious artist that he can write lines as carelessly commonplace as:

> The proper way to eat a fig, in society,
> Is to split it in four, holding it by the stump,
> And open it, so that it is a glittering, rosy, moist, honied, heavy-petalled four-petalled flower.
>
> But the vulgar way
> Is just to put your mouth to the crack, and take out the flesh in one bite.

In the midst of passages of sheer genius — passages which throw their twisted heat from the page like a living flame — there are the most amazing lapses, dull statements, cheap localisms, frenzied reiterations. For example a poem, "Bare Almond Trees", begins with an attempt to fix the object visually:

> Wet almond trees, in the rain,
> Like iron sticking grimly out of the earth.

But this is not enough. Lawrence retreats a few steps, squints at the trees again, and says:

> Black almond trunks, in the rain,
> Like iron implements, twisted, hideous, out of the earth.

Again he goes off, cocks his head, and adds:

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> Almond trees, curving blackly, iron-dark.

And once more:

> Almond tree, beneath the terrace rail,
> Black, rusted, iron trunk . . .

And so on — "sensitive steel in the air", "iron branching", "rusted like old, twisted implements" — worrying the slight figure to death.

There are several explanations for Lawrence's recent verbosity. My own conclusion is that his conversion to free verse has almost ruined the poet. In the earlier, more formal poetry (especially in "Amores" and "Look, We Have Come Through!"), the poet not only showed the power of his emotion but made his imagination vivid. Had he written "Bare Almond Trees" five or six years ago, the very limitations of his structure would have forced him to find the one firmly shaped, completed image for his iron trunk and black branches instead of threshing about among experimental repetitions. Freed from the demands of a concise structure, relieved of the necessity of fusing all the variations of any figure into the thing itself, Lawrence is merely free to turn what should have been white ecstasy into sputtering loquacity. To carry him through, he trusts neither art nor taste, only his power of emotion. And it is a proof of Lawrence's genius that, in spite of everything, he so often succeeds.

Tulips and Chimneys. By E. E. Cummings. Thomas Seltzer.
Against This Age. By Maxwell Bodenheim. Boni and Liveright.
Birds, Beasts and Flowers. By D. H. Lawrence. Thomas Seltzer.

RECENT BOOKS IN BRIEF REVIEW

THERE is a defenseless naïveté about Algernon Blackwood's "Episodes Before Thirty" (Dutton) which, in these days of sophisticated autobiography, shields its refreshing simplicity as the frank chatter of a child is guarded. Blackwood tells of his step from an English family of accepted respectability into America, where he stumbled into misfortune because his eyes were not and could not be trained to the perception of rascality. His unpleasant escapades led him into a mysticism which threw a peaceful shade from the blinding disillusionment that each year brought. In telling how the generosity of nature meant compensation for human selfishness, he rather impels one to star gazing in the hope of acquiring his consoling perspective. The entertaining anecdotes are told in the graceful undisturbing swing of complacent reflective maturity.

One never really knows a pedagogue until one sees him away from his classroom. When one glimpses him out on a bit of a spree one really understands the man who, at times, is a teacher. N. Bryllion Fagin, dean of the School of Arts of Research University, has been out on a "toot". During school months he tells youngsters how to write short stories for a living. In "Short Story Writing — An Art or a Trade?" (Seltzer) he admits that collegiate instruction in short

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story writing clips the wings of genius and makes artizans out of artists. Here is his relief from preaching the commercialism that draws so many into the short story field. Here is his honest idea of what the short story is, can be, and should be. He is merciless, but as entertaining as any professor we have ever read on his own subject. The book is primarily for those who have been told to keep away from literature and write according to pattern, to whom it gives consolation for disappointed genius and disgusted ambition.

There are abundant opportunities for good Americans to laugh at the English — and the other way round — but there are far too few chances for us to laugh with them. In fact, British humor has been known to induce a sense of deep pessimism and distrust in the bosoms of those who snicker at Gallagher and Shean and laugh uproariously at the indefatigable George M. Cohan. So we have to thank whatever gods there be in the world of printers' ink for a thoroughly amusing book from the pen of the famous A. P. H. of "Punch". With equal facility the burlesques and droll dialogues of "The Man About Town" (Doubleday, Page) should stir the risibilities of American readers from New York to San Francisco, as they have moved to a possibly more decorous laughter the readers of that famous British journal. With A. P. Herbert — to give his full name — and George, his companion-in-search-of-a-good-time, you may laugh (up your sleeve, of course) at the serious foibles and droll pretensions of our so called civilized society. We are aware that it is no new thing to satirize spiritualism, golf, Turkish baths, charity, and little theatre organizations, clubs, and even the telephone book, but we know of no humorist who does it with the grace and deep seated chuckling wit of A. P. H. So dull a matter as the author's correspondence with the Port of London authority regarding a flight of steps to the Thames at the foot of his garden wall becomes a hilarious adventure. As a book to leave in the room of the tired week end guest we recommend "The Man About Town".

The already abundant Carlyle bibliography is enriched by the new collection of "Letters of Thomas Carlyle" (Stokes), comprising the epistolary record of Carlyle's friendship with John Stuart Mill, John Sterling, and Robert Browning. The occasion offered when Mill's unpublished letters were purchased at public auction in 1922 by the Carlyle's House Memorial Trust. Alexander Carlyle has furnished the necessary explanatory notes, and an index. The letters work no changes concerning Carlyle's life and work, for the main outlines have been fixed by the hands busy at correcting J. A. Froude's biography. These letters illustrate again the phenomenal alertness and gusto of the man, his erudition, his racy topicality, his vigorous, ejaculatory dogmatism. The style was the man! — in letters as in more extended literary forms.

Anthologies are the hardy perennials of modern literature. Each season has its crop of collected editions of the poets, with verses brought together according to the set plan or capricious taste of the compiler. "Verse of Our Day" (Appleton) contains, in the words of the introduction, "poems that seem to breathe the modern spirit". To choose "three hundred and forty-seven poems rep-

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resenting the work of one hundred and thirty-four poets" (English and American) is no mean task, but we have a feeling that the editors, Margery Gordon and Marie B. King, subordinated sound critical judgment to a pedantic plan of elaborate classification. Under many heads and subheads: Nature, Experience, Love and Friendship, Memory, etc., they group much verse that is pleasant but second rate, and only a comparatively small number of poems that seem to us to have artistic permanence and genuine fire. A list of contemporary verse that has been set to music, at the end of the volume, may be of some value to the singer, but the brief biographical notes that precede it are surely too meagre to give either information or guidance toward an evaluation of the poets here presented.

"Embassies of Other Days" (Doran), as Lady Paget calls her two volumes of reminiscences from 1839 to 1893, is a thoroughly enjoyable book of memoirs. A Saxon Countess of Hohenthal, from childhood a personal friend of German royal and princely personages, maid of honor at Queen Victoria's court (1858), she married an English diplomat, Augustus Paget, and as his wife came in touch at the European capitals, especially Vienna, with all who were most representative of the society of her period. Lady Paget's reminiscences are simply written; there is no affectation, no pose. They have the appeal made by sincerity, a sense of humor, and a clear observation. They are a colorful, intimate invocation of the radiant Europe of royal and imperial courts between which and the ruined Europe of today yawns the gulf of the Great War: a picturesque record of a past which already seems as remote as Rome's Augustan age or the century of Louis XIV.

There are experiences so unusual that one must revise the entire range of one's preconceived notions in order to adjust old beliefs to new facts. Something of the sort seems to have happened to Bertram and Dora Russell, and the result is "The Prospects of Industrial Civilization" (Century). Both saw Bolshevik Russia in 1920 and then set about reconciling their totally different reactions. A stay in non-industrial China aided in the formation of new ideas. As a result, these two have come to believe that "the important fact of the present time is not the struggle between capitalism and socialism but the struggle between industrial civilization and humanity." "R. U. R." and "The World We Live In" seem to have expressed this idea in dramatic form. The first half of the book is devoted to the exposition of this idea. Industrialism, it is pointed out, has changed the nature of property and of nationalism, and we must accordingly change ideas of them based on pre-industrial conceptions. Unless, the authors warn, industrialism works harmoniously, a process which requires socialism and some degree of internationalism, it may be expected to destroy itself and civilization. In that case, humanity can begin all over again, as in the dark ages. The second half of the book strives, with less success, to indicate the approach to the new social order.

Max Beerbohm is a small bright flame which miraculously keeps its light under the glare of many thousand candle power incandescent lamps. Giants and semi-giants toil mightily and great novels and short stories are

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born in pain; Max turns from the easel to dash off a thumbnail essay between a smart tea and a smarter dinner and many turn from the work of Giants to smile at the essay. Limited, yes, unbearably limited perhaps, but for all his urbanity, kindly and not incapable of fine anger. His "Yet Again" (Knopf) is made up of short and relatively unimportant essays, but they all bear the cachet of a master. That they stimulate with the sharpest wit in England—which in our opinion means in the world — goes without saying.

"The New Larned History" (C. A. Nichols), as previously noted, is an historical encyclopædia in which the articles are composed almost entirely of extracts from the works of great writers, historians, ethnologists, and so on. Four more of the ultimate twelve volumes have been added to the four already issued, carrying the reader from Froebel to Rome. The work is excellently arranged and indexed; is liberally provided with maps, illustrations, and texts of documents; and is up to date.

The most interesting fact about "Illini Poetry, 1918-1923" (Covici-McGee) is that it is the first book of verse to present the work of undergraduates in a middle western state university. It is strange indeed that we have not seen this book long before, so sure have been the literary proconsuls, stationed at the Chicago legation, that the middle west poetical renaissance was in train. (The inaccurate use of the word "renaissance" is a critical convention always to be used in discussing the middle west.) This book, produced in the poetry "workshop" at the University of Illinois, is edited by Bruce Weirick, a faculty member whose labor has not flagged in the promotion of the poetry society at Illinois in the five years of its existence. This is an excellent book of college poetry; which is to say, it is intelligent, self conscious; either imitative of the received models, or in a mood of studied revolt. The subject matter inclines toward love — but a love more Cyrenaic than the loves of earlier college poets — a love in which courtship, plighted troths, and honorable intentions pale before the counted pulses of a moment's ecstasy. There is, too, an infusion of philosophy, collegiate interests, and nature in her prairie modes. But it is the book's paganism, so unsuspected by the seaboarder, that makes the book for the student of literary currents. It is not all corn they hoe out in Illinois — nor they, perhaps, who hoe it!

Sidney Dark and Rowland Grey have not used the most interesting method in producing "W. S. Gilbert, His Life and Letters" (Doran). While they have gone to original sources for information concerning this famous "Bab Ballads" man, in giving the results of their studies to the public they have been content to assemble those original sources without much interesting interpretation or comment. Every page in the book is heavy with small type quotations. One enjoys reading what Gilbert wrote, and one enjoys, too, what others have written of Gilbert. Yet, to make a book of this sort suitable for the average reader, there must be more than a collection of autographed letters and verses. One would not read the book to find an interesting life or man. Only those eager to read details of Gilbert himself would make the venture. Perhaps a great love for the man might

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cast a spell over the reader, but there is nothing in the handling of the biographical matter to create that love.

Advertising beginners and professionals will both profit by the unique approach to the principles of their craft embodied in "A Textbook of Advertisement Designing and Writing" (Dutton) by B. C. Woodcock, an English authority. The value of this volume lies in its thorough handling of the mechanical elements of an advertisement: the author tabulates 869 ways of grouping them. The information offered on psychology is quite slender and rather transatlantic. The illustrations of layouts are of practical help.

It is unfortunate that a painter of the admirable qualities of Sir William Orpen should undertake to do a work such as "The Outline of Art" (Putnam). It is unfortunate because one automatically expects other than elementary things from him — expects them even in spite of the publisher's announcement that "this book is not intended for the specialist", etc. The feeling is, if only an ethical one, that Sir William has no business writing art primers. One does not look for weather almanacs from Madame Curie. The book — the first of a two volume series—is concise, even to the point of being juiceless; replete with such yarns as, "The boy Master discovered drawing at his father's knee"; and is accompanied by moderately well chosen but immoderately badly printed reproductions of celebrated paintings. The color reproductions offend particularly.

There is a suspended quality to Japanese poetry which original English verse does not eclipse. It comes from an incompleteness, a faith in the imagination of the reader. Sometimes it seems to find its purpose in a wistfulness too tender to express itself entirely, too subtle to yield itself to words. Curtis Hidden Page has succeeded in carrying this quality into his translations. As they appear throughout "Japanese Poetry, An Historical Essay" (Houghton Mifflin), they capture the reader susceptible to nuances and implications. Here are two chosen at random, not because they excel the others but because they are representative:

> Admired and admirer, both must go.
> They bloom, I look . . . .
> They fade . . . . and even so . . . .
>
> O leaves of Autumn, strewing all the ground,
> Whence come ye? — many more than e'er I found
> Alive upon the trees.

Mr. Page sketches the history of Japanese poetry from its first use, and he does it with a touch that pleases. His method of scattering the poems throughout the pages seems much more effective than grouping them at the end. There are pictures, too, to aid in creating an oriental atmosphere in this well made limited edition.

It is with distaste that we read unqualified enthusiasm. Coming from the author of "Futility" it seems especially out of place. Yet in "Anton Chehov, A Critical Study" (Duffield), William Gerhardi bubbles without restraint. There is a scholarly air about the book, despite which it can see nothing but superlative genius in the great Russian. This is more than a following of the current worship of pre-revolutionary Russia. Mr. Gerhardi has taken Chehov to his heart in a genuine embrace of love. This explains the manner of "Futility",

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but it does not excuse too much exuberance. Perfection has not been reached in literature, and it is hard to read one who seems to believe it has.

Those who are unable to digest anything of a more powerful or stimulating nature, and yet have a taste for the charming and intimate, will find E. V. Lucas's new little book unusually delightful. It deals with nothing in particular, but much in general. Trivial reminiscence is here, brief sketches of everyday occurrences and things — things which most of us pass by unnoticed. "Luck of the Year" (Doran) leaves one conscious of having been entertained with a gentle friendliness that is satisfying.

That the average man thinks mistakenly of child labor as a matter of sweatshops, insanitary conditions, and vague cruelties, and assumes that those are the only reasons why it should be abolished, is more or less the keynote of Raymond G. Fuller's "Child Labor and the Constitution" (Crowell). His aim, arising out of years of valuable work for child welfare, is to make that average man — the man who can help — understand that, even though conditions of child labor have improved considerably, it is not so much what child labor *is* as what child labor *means* that counts— what it means to the generations living and to come; what it means to the Constitution. Mr. Fuller's statistics, his human documents, his forceful and soundly backed remarks fascinate and horrify. Yet all the while one gets the feeling that the author is being moderate, if anything, in his choice of material. The book is a worthwhile contribution toward the stamping out of a great and far reaching evil.

There is a dispassionate quality about "The Russian Soviet Republic" (Century) that makes one welcome this third book dealing with the big economic experiment written by Edward Alsworth Ross, professor of sociology at the University of Wisconsin. Yet, for all its dispassionate treatment of history, there is apparent a tremendous passion for truth. Professor Ross is disgusted with the lies that have come out of Russia — lies emanating from the two conflicting political camps. He is sick of the newspaper stories. For his material he has gone to original sources, and the story he tells is amazing in its revelations. No book on Russia that has appeared since the revolution seems so just and fair. Professor Ross does not support the tenets of the Bolsheviki, but he will not bend to echo the lies of the émigrés.

"Masquerade" (McBride) by Ben Ray Redman has much of the disillusioned tone of Thomas Hardy's "Songs of Satire". There is a touch of bitterness running through these well built verses—bitterness softened, perhaps, by an ironic smile. Mr. Redman has taken his bitter medicine of sophistication, but when that tonic was down he was still able to smile. The taste is still on his lips, but he forces them into a grimace of sardonic enjoyment. There is a robustness about the book, despite its simple construction and its slender form, which makes much of the current poetical output seem colorless as plants raised without sunlight.

Once a week in the London "Daily Chronicle" there is a little essay by C. Lewis Hind under the general title of "Life and I". These have been collected and published with the same

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name (Dodd, Mead) and they make as delightful a volume of informal articles as one can find. They are leisurely and philosophic, touched with humor and strongly colored with sentiment. Mr. Hind's space was limited to half a column, so that all the essays are short; despite the rambling way in which he drifts from one subject to another, there is an artistic unity to each. The subtitle reads: "The Era of Julius Cæsar, Aged 3-4." Julius Cæsar is the child in the house and a most lovable little fellow, who claims and deserves much of the credit for the success of the "arkikles". Whether the subject is gipsies or Wren's churches, the pervading influence is Julius Cæsar's.

In "A Story Teller: Forty Years in London" (Doran) W. Pett Ridge, the author of twenty two novels and a number of short stories, shows atmosphere, periods, and persons of London during forty years of his career. Such visitors as Mark Twain and Booker Washington are mentioned, and Dickens has a chapter. A brief index supplies the important names included in the book. The chapter "Songs of the Street" is a complete essay in itself; "Our Manners" and "The Cockney Humour" will appeal especially to those who are students of London Town as an historic field. There is a frontispiece portrait of the author, and six portrait drawings of him.

When you look over "The Complete Poems of Robert Louis Stevenson" (Scribner), the first collected edition of his poetical works, you will probably find that you have been belittling him as a poet. Here is much beauty and some grandeur. Here, true, are many verses which reek with sentiment to a point of annoyance; but over against them can be placed "Ticonderoga", "Requiem", "I Will Make You Brooches and Toys for Your Delight", the exquisite "Tropic Rain", and many more. What a curiously diverse author R. L. S. was. How bad he is at worst and how many of us, alas, like best the worst in him. Let's not forget the best of him however.

Likely enough, someone possessed of the requisite Urim and Thummim can see in "The Poet Assassinated" all that the writer of the introduction does. Unfortunately, those lacking the blessed Egyptian spectacles may think that the Broom Publishing Company and Matthew Josephson wasted precious time, paper, and excellent composition and presswork on this translation from the work of the late Guillaume Apollinaire—otherwise Wilhelm de Kostrovitzki. The plot of this production is touched up here and there with details concerning the functions of reproduction and the processes of metabolism. Otherwise it fulfils the translator's description: "form that is complete (sic) unrepresentative, with perpetual digressions and asides."

The French Revolutionists claimed to have made greater progress in six years than their predecessors had made in six centuries. They had not witnessed the decade 1914–1923, the events and consequences of which throw into comparative insignificance this earlier pinnacle of historic mutation. Had they clairvoyantly foreseen this later period, their assertion might have been less bold. Realizing, then, that a span of time is, to the historian, of importance only in relation to the events and changes which

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it brings forth, one does not wonder that more than one third of the revised and enlarged edition of Charles Downer Hazen's "Europe Since 1815" (Holt) should be given to the years subsequent to the Serbian assassination. The work of an accredited historian, "Europe Since 1815" is a thorough, analytical, and suggestive presentation of European history from the downfall of Napoleon to the present occupation of the Ruhr.

There is, about "American Artists" (Scribner) by Royal Cortissoz, the evidence of much erudition, sound decision, and an unmistakable air of charm. In his papers on Vedder, Childe Hassam, Arthur B. Davies, and others Mr. Cortissoz writes not only with facility but with conviction. His manner of retailing his knowledge to the reader is admirable. His chapters, as for instance "The Lure of Technic", "The Slashing Stroke", "Women in Impressionism", show a freshness and an ability to find virgin fields and new lines of thought—the latter an unusual thing at this stage of art dissertation. The illustrations are, for the most part, commendable not only from the point of reproduction but as nice selections. Mr. Cortissoz has done more than simply add one more art book to an already wearisomely long line—he has done a Whistler in prose.

The possibility of writing too intimately is exemplified in "Together" (McBride) by Norman Douglas. Here is the record of a season spent in an Alpine Village. It is full of the first person pronoun. W. H. Hudson could do that, and the more intimate he became, the better we enjoyed it. But there is no Hudson personality here to justify the intimacies. Mr. Douglas may be a delightful companion, but his book does not carry charm enough to hold one intent upon his diary.

"Private" Harold R. Peat, Canadian hero and author of a once famous war book, has not rested upon the glory of his Victoria Cross. During the past few years he has visited more than a dozen countries, always asking questions and always thinking. At last, in "The Inexcusable Lie" (Barse, Hopkins), he tells his conclusion: that war is bestial, cowardly, degrading, and encouragement to fraud and deceit, and (save in the compulsion of some actual emergency) a form of national treason; that men, boys at heart, go to war only because they have been swindled into believing that it is gallant, glorious, patriotic, a great deal of fun, and an ideal that calls forth emulation. This belief, skilfully imparted by home, school, and society, is *the inexcusable lie*, and the author calls upon these institutions, in the name of the doomed innocents, to tell the truth. Mr. Peat writes crudely but very clearly and with intense conviction. He touches upon sides of the question that only a soldier—a thoughtful soldier—could know about; but, in the opinion of this reviewer, he attributes too much influence over young minds to the teachings of the school, and far too little to those of the street, the ball field, and the barber shop.

Gradually the sections of our country are becoming conscious of their local flavors. Richmond, capital of the old south, has long been known for the charm of its life and atmosphere. But never, probably, has anyone written of it with so keen a sense for the feeling of place combined with so

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competent a knowledge of city history as Mary Newton Stanard exhibits in "Richmond, Its People and Its Story" (Lippincott). Wife of a local historian and scion of a distinguished family, Mrs. Stanard is naturally fitted to sketch a story of the leisurely growth of this curious town from its pioneer rudeness, through days of political splendor, social gaiety, the grimness of war, at last to the urge of progress. Prejudiced, of course, this account is so thorough yet so sprightly as to give the reader an uncanny sensation of hearing the tale from the lips of a wise woman who has herself lived through it all.

"American Poetry Since 1900" (Holt) is a new and really de luxe edition of Louis Untermeyer's earlier volume. It contains much information concerning American poetry, and there is no questioning Untermeyer's genuinely honest critical viewpoint. His judgments are formed from a love of poetry and a study of it. He has developed a somewhat tight but commendable viewpoint, from which he proceeds. Those tendencies and those poets which fall outside the rays of this viewpoint he quite deliberately slights; but for the most part his view is fairly inclusive. He has made many additions of names and of conclusions to this new volume. Just as it was one of the best guides to American poetry in its old guise, it is an even better one in its new form.

When the Department of Justice sent Kate Richards O'Hare to prison for alleged violation of the Espionage Act, it unwittingly gave an impetus to the cause of American prison reform that could not have been gained in any other way. Her fourteen months' martyrdom at Jefferson City, Missouri, resulted in the most terrific arraignment of prison abuses that has ever found its way out of those cold, grey walls. "In Prison" (Knopf) is not pleasant reading; no book written from the "inside" by a reasonably accurate observer ever could be. Like other social and political idealists committed to serve penal sentences, Mrs. O'Hare points out that behind the clanging doors of an American penal institution the Dark Ages rule. In the face of her damning evidence of waste, cruelty, unspeakable filth, and moral degradation in the administration of a state prison, it is difficult to share the optimism of certain reformers and impossible to understand the sentimentalism of others. It is shocking that the extremity of martyrdom should have been necessary to produce this brilliant study in criminology.

How two people can get passage on a freighter and embark with as little enthusiasm as one finds in the first chapter of "We Explore the Great Lakes" by Webb Waldron (Century), is difficult to imagine. The monotony, glare, and heat are emphasized until one wonders why they did not give up the project. They didn't, however, and from the account of Duluth's climb to supremacy right through to the very last word on page 384, the book is filled with likable people, fascinating bits of history, and description of country that will certainly create a desire to see the truly Great Lakes first. Mr. Waldron has tried to please everybody; for the "readers who love statistics" he has injected occasional doses of figures, but not enough to spoil his work. The book is delightfully illustrated by Marion P. Waldron.

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THE BOOKMAN'S MONTHLY SCORE

Compiled by Frank Parker Stockbridge, Life Member of the American Library Association, in Cooperation with the Public Libraries of America

Three new titles in the February fiction score! The reporter feels like crying, with Cousin Egbert, "Three rousing cheers!" Then he looks again at the list and heaves a sigh of resignation. Oh, nothing very dreadful; merely that the inevitable has happened again. Zane Grey, Booth Tarkington, Kathleen Norris—an invincible trio. There is no human power that can keep any of these authors out of the list of the ten most popular books, whenever any of them perpetrates a new volume. Zane Grey, robust and acrobatic, leaps instantly from nowhere to second place. If memory serves (check me if I'm wrong) this is the first time he has failed to achieve the top at a single bound. It speaks well for Mrs. Atherton's staying powers that "Black Oxen" continues to hold the lead in the face of such powerful competition.

There comes a time when the jaded commentator looks hopefully at each new name that appears more than once in the reports of the librarians; hopefully, because it hardly seems credible that a mere handful of writers should forever so nearly monopolize popular interest. Yet these reports show conclusively that only a very few novelists have caught the trick of writing in such a vein that they are assured of popular success The really amazing thing is, after all, that everybody should be reading the same thing at the same time.—F. P. S.

FICTION

1.	Black Oxen	*Gertrude Atherton*	LIVERIGHT
2.	The Call of the Canyon	*Zane Grey*	HARPER
3.	Bread	*Charles G. Norris*	DUTTON
4.	Never the Twain Shall Meet	*Peter B. Kyne*	COSMOPOLITAN
5.	A Lost Lady	*Willa Cather*	KNOPF
6.	The Mine with the Iron Door	*Harold Bell Wright*	APPLETON
7.	The Able McLaughlins	*Margaret Wilson*	HARPER
8.	Butterfly	*Kathleen Norris*	DOUBLEDAY
9.	The Covered Wagon	*Emerson Hough*	APPLETON
10.	The Midlander	*Booth Tarkington*	DOUBLEDAY

GENERAL

1.	Life of Christ	*Giovanni Papini*	HARCOURT
2.	Etiquette	*Emily Post*	FUNK & WAGNALLS
3.	Life and Letters of Walter H. Page	*Burton J. Hendrick*	DOUBLEDAY
4.	The Dance of Life	*Havelock Ellis*	HOUGHTON
5.	My Garden of Memory	*Kate Douglas Wiggin*	HOUGHTON
6.	The Outline of History	*H. G. Wells*	MACMILLAN
7.	The Americanization of Edward Bok	*Edward Bok*	SCRIBNER
8.	The Mind in the Making	*James Harvey Robinson*	HARPER
9.	Up Stream	*Ludwig Lewisohn*	LIVERIGHT
10.	A Man From Maine	*Edward Bok*	SCRIBNER

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IN THE BOOKMAN'S MAIL

MY DEAR MR. FARRAR:
In his stimulating article on Hawthorne's "Scarlet Letter", Mr. Llewellyn Jones writes: "No such class [as illegitimate children] exists in nature, nor does it exist in the Scandinavian countries." Mr. Jones's meaning is clear: a child loves readily and needs love. We do not regard a child as "illegitimate", for the helpless and lovable member of the human family has after all a real father and a real mother.

The statement, however, not merely admits of, it rather incites to, misinterpretation; for one would think at once that the three northern countries are unfamiliar with the child born out of wedlock. Such children, however, constitute even now one of Scandinavia's gravest problems, but one that she is solving with charity, intelligence, and rapidity. According to published statistics (I cannot vouch for them, for the "class" is not "recognized") every fourth man and woman seen on the streets of, say, Copenhagen, is of illegitimate birth. I watched, while in Christiania in the spring of 1917, the vital statistics as these were being published in the daily papers. At that time, the *egte* (legitimate) born were running some fifty odd per centum of the total, the *uegte* (illegitimate) some forty odd per centum. That is hard; it is being corrected.

While waiting one day for a local out of Larvik on the extreme southern coast of Norway, I was dazed and delighted to see that that stationette supported a quite sizable newsstand: magazines, papers, books. I was struck by the name of Hawthorne attached to a volume called "Det flammende Bogstav". It took about a second to see that that was Norwegian for "Scarlet Letter". The front lid was illustrated with a big "H" surrounded by flames of red. It took another second to recall that the "A" of Hawthorne would have to be an "H" in Norwegian owing to the word over there for "Adulterer". On inquiry I found that the book has a good sale.

The situation explains why the illegitimate child plays such a heavy rôle in Scandinavian literature. Hjalmar Bergman's "God's Orchid", one of the very latest importations, turns on it exclusively. Ibsen wrote "Ghosts". Hamsun, Bojer, Strindberg, Nexö, Undset — their works are peopled with the sons and daughters of men born in passion. But the Scandinavians have not introduced characters of this type, or "class", because they like the type, or because they favor the continuation of it. Quite the contrary. They are trying to eliminate it from society. We dare not become unmindful of the fact that the country makes the poet and not the reverse.

Yours sincerely,
ALLEN W. PORTERFIELD.

TO THE BOOKMAN:
On reading Hamlin Garland's "Pioneers and City Dwellers", in the December BOOKMAN, I am moved to reply, even though he may consider me presuming enough, to do so.

I have read and loved the works of this eminent man, and because the rereading of his "Daughter of the Middle Border" has been so recent a delight, that pleasure is marred by the confession of this article. . . .

What sentiment can any young person have for the home of his childhood, when that home has been a "cell in a New York apartment house", changed perhaps each May? Grim necessity may make it thus for many, others do not know of the charm of contented rural life, but for one who *does* know, and has made hosts of his readers feel it so poignantly, it seems almost treason. . . .

I have faith to believe this "psychology of concentration", this gregarious tendency, will bring its own reaction. Mr. Garland admits he hates the physical aspect of the city, but argues that this is offset by intellectual companionship and chance for a career for his children. Can the coming generation, bred and reared in an artificial atmosphere, reflect in its literature the ideals we have in such men as Tarkington, Riley, Barrie, Thoreau, Roosevelt, and Garland himself? Or will it be doomed to such psychological brainstorms and erotic slush as the group of brilliant young writers are giving us? Clever, perhaps, but transgressing the bounds of good taste, to say nothing of right ideals. The fruit of this concentration will bring its own reaction. A reaction toward the freedom of open spaces, the emancipation from convention which is found in a return to the soil, and the wholesomeness of thought and peace of mind and heart found there. This return may in this day of advancement have all the advantages of the city that are really vital and worthwhile.

MRS. J. M. RICHER.

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FOREIGN NOTES AND COMMENT

Norwegian-Dutch-Italian-German-Breton

FOUR years ago, I took the elevator to the tenth floor of the "Times" Annex, went up, alighted, and did homage to the colored Lynceus (I mean the Lynceus who was killed by Pollux, not the one who had forty nine brothers each of whom was killed by his bride), preparatory to seeing the then editor of the "Times Book Review". Lynceus handed me a scrap of paper with the request that I sign my name and state my business. Under the latter heading I scrawled "MS." He delivered the paper and in due time the genial Dr. Clifford Smyth appeared. Upon being told that my manuscript was a review of a certain foreign book, he asked whether the book had been translated into English. I told him it had not. He replied: "I'm sorry, but we never consider books written in foreign languages until they have been translated." It was impossible for me to persuade him even to touch the package, to say nothing of giving its contents a trial reading.

Today, the "Times" reviews many books that have never been translated and never will be. This is due to a change of policy, and not to a change of editors. The new policy is to be commended. And in this regard we are already leagues ahead of Europe. It is rare that an untranslated foreign book is discussed in the average European magazine.

Nor is this the sole advance we have made over Europe: it looks now as though the time may come when we shall have outdistanced even Germany and Scandinavia in the matter of translations. France, England, Holland, Italy, and Spain we left behind some years ago. This is as it should be. Let the immigrant read for a while his daily paper in his native tongue if he wants to. But the sooner he reads the great masters of his native land in English translations the sooner we shall have a body of foreign born whose connections with the old country are reminiscential rather than political.

The books before us are symptomatic of our present attitude toward translated, or transferred, thought. Knut Hamsun told me with his own organs of speech, seven years ago, that his compound work entitled "Children of the Age" and "The Town of Segelfoss" was nothing for the American people. He insisted that it was too long and too inactive for us. He was right at the time. Today he is wrong. For it is not the Nobel Prize, nor the "Growth of the Soil" that has made the translation of these books seem advisable. It is the much broader outlook we now have regarding foreign literatures that is motivating their publication.

The first part of the work, "Children of the Age", may be described as the rise and fall of a family. The hero, Willatz Holmsen, is the third of that name. His grandfather was a powerful old Norwegian, almost a chieftain of the textbooks; his father was the worthy son of a worthy sire. He himself shows the conventional signs of decay. He is stern, orderly, proud, reasonably industrious, and reasonably intelligent, but he is no

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longer in control of things and this despite his good intentions and his excessive stubbornness. His great holdings are gradually being bought up by the strong man of the novel, Tobias Holmengraa, who is the hero of the novel that is to follow, "The Town of Segelfoss". His son, Willatz Holmsen IV, is a musician and not much more. The father dies in the last chapter as the result of exhuming a chest of gold which his forebear had buried when the war came on.

The few serious students the world has today of the motion picture claim that it is wellnigh impossible to write a good scenario unless it is written for a special actor, and unless the writer is thoroughly familiar with the personal traits, big, little, and medium, of this actor. Knut Hamsun could qualify. He is in all probability the most discriminating observer of human nature that world literature has to record in 1924. His power to analyze character is matchless. In this book, for example, Lieutenant Holmsen, as the hero is called, has a habit of changing his ring from finger to finger when something disturbs him, or when he wishes to pursue a certain policy at a certain time. The motif is small; but it is one of many, and the whole is equal to the sum of its parts. Hamsun is a psychological adding machine.

Dutch literature in this country? The university student knows Vondel, who is alleged to have influenced Milton, and the general reader knows Louis Couperus, who died four months ago. This is not enough; for Holland has a splendid body of national literature, and our civic debt to the Dutch can never be paid. It is consequently a rare pleasure to recommend this story of Parisian life by E. and M. Scharten-Antink, not merely because it is a work of marked æsthetic value, but because these are new names on our spiritual horizon.

We can hardly call "A House Full of People" a novel. That is, it is not a novel such as an American would feel inclined to write. Our novelists would balk at the thought of devoting 350 pages to the occurrences of a city apartment that housed only thirteen small families, and then limiting their observations to one year. But it is within reason to believe that if some gifted writer were to do for some typical New York flat what these subjects of Queen Wilhelmina have done for No. 118 in Paris, we should have a work of fiction that would sell wherever good books are sold.

If the major part of the interest centres in Aristide the young artist who lives on the top floor with Jozette —this is her second liaison after having tried her fortune as a corset maker—it is well to be tolerant: such may happen in the best of well regulated houses. The other characters, from the senator and the physician down to Carpentier, Monsieur and Madame, the vigilant *concièrges*, all have their tales to tell, their lives to live. The Scharten-Antinks are mimeographers of human nature.

Italian literature in this country? It has been relatively popular since a few years after Cristoforo Colombo went up and over to Iceland to learn from the Norwegians how to get to America, they having already discovered it. But it has been popular from the Dante, Tasso, and Petrarch point of view, and they represent the university seminars. Luigi Pirandello? He is not mentioned in any of the quite up to date cyclopædias. To find out when he was born (1867), it is necessary to thumb a card catalogue in a liberal library. Now he is one

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of our spiritual fixtures, though I am bound to contend that, to judge from the nature of the three dramas contained in the volume before us, he is hardly destined to please or pack our theatres: the man is too subtle; he is too rigid in his use of the *logos;* too much of a metaphysician. Any dramatist who wishes to win the American theatrical public has to visualize his action so clearly that thinking may stop with the rumination necessary to persuade the prospective patron to deposit the established sum at the box office windowette. Pirandello is good reading; but I am one who would like to see "The Pleasure of Honesty" tried out on a real American audience. I can see even now many leaving about the time Maurizio Setti (Act I) begins his exegesis on Descartes; others would follow with the Rector's comment on Sigismund, King of the Burgundians (Act II); if not, they would at the references made to Karl Savigny, once noted professor of law at Heidelberg.

The volume is admirably introduced and excellently translated by Arthur Livingston. Pirandello is an extension course in logic and moral philosophy required of all beginners who intend to major in the department of comparative literature. A syllabus got out for the benefit of the less informed would show that the "novel" feature of "Each in His Own Way" —a play within a play—is old stuff to students of German, Ludwig Tieck having done it, and very successfully, a hundred and thirty years ago. Savigny was Tieck's friend. Probably Pirandello knows a thing or two about German Romanticism.

German literature in this country? It has been popular from the beginning, or since the establishment of the boundaries of Pennsylvania. It took, to be sure, a step back after April 6, 1917, but it is again lunging to the fore. Kellermann's "The Sea", while it will neither make us forget "Faust" nor solve the problems of the Shipping Board, will at least show that there is such a thing as lightness in German fiction. The author tells his own tale—that of a footloose fellow who lives for a while on a Breton island, and strikes up a morally reprehensible affair with a native by the name of Rosseherre who is engaged to Yann, a two fisted toper. The lady becomes rather indignant when her exotic *amorato* takes overgreat interest in No. 2, Yvonne by name. There is no phase of *al fresco* passion which Kellermann does not touch upon, and no sound, movement, or peculiarity of the sea which he has not depicted. It is a rather good story, to tell the truth. Kellermann is the carbon copy, first duplicate, of fanciful observations taken in odd places.

Breton literature in this country? It hardly existed until Kellermann's tale arrived. Now it is here, and it should be of interest, particularly to such members of the A. E. F. as passed through Brest.

In Pirandello's "The Pleasure of Honesty", Baldovino says: "I am like a person trying to circulate gold money in a country that has never seen anything but paper: people are

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Children of the Age. By Knut Hamsun. Translated from the Norwegian by J. S. Scott. Alfred A. Knopf.

A House Full of People. By E. and M. Scharten-Antink. Translated from the Dutch by J. Menzeis Wilson. Small, Maynard and Company.

Each in His Own Way and Two Other Plays. By Luigi Pirandello. Translated from the Italian by Arthur Livingston. E. P. Dutton and Co.

The Sea. By Bernard Kellermann. Translated from the German by Sasha Best. Robert M. McBride and Co.

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inclined to suspect the gold. It is quite natural." Without laboring the point to excess, we have been inclined to suspect these "foreigners" with their books. In some instances the caution has been well founded. In others, it is a case of gold where paper only has been recognized. But in any case, these translated works familiarize us with tender of an unfamiliar legality. Experience, for one reason or another, is always golden.

ALLEN W. PORTERFIELD

Italians, and One Italian

IT would be easy to fall into the theme of beautiful but broken and misunderstood Italy, and, drawing an analogy from the immediately filled quota of allowed immigrants, lament that the too small quota of Italian literary men is also filled to the exclusion of certain authors equally or more worthy of admission. D'Annunzio, Papini, Pirandello, Benelli—they are quite enough, it seems, of that hot and strangely nervous talent proverbially Italian.

Great literature is universal. Great literature smacks of its birthplace and the blood of its parents. Two conflicting statements which, as usual, need to be combined in order to approach truth. Whereas the broadminded student of literature is able and quick to see the universal in the local, and whereas the Italianity of the four authors mentioned above is seen to contain something which is essential and common and so of interest to all nations, there is nevertheless one other talented Italian author whose complaisance, restraint, and humor create a style which is much more Anglo-Saxon.

An author who should be more widely known in this country is Adolfo Albertazzi, a writer of short stories primarily, and also of novels, reviews, scholarly studies in literature, and children's stories, a man fifty eight years old who began writing as a student of Carducci.

A student of Carducci! Then he is not a part of that young Italy which has been shouting to make itself heard at home and abroad? This is a question of no great importance in itself, but a question which would be a very good starting point for a discussion of the youths of literary Italy or, better, of Italian youthfulness, of which the contemporary intellectual enthusiasm (if nothing else but enthusiasm) is one manifestation, and the Mussolini enthusiasm another.

For the present let us say, concerning this half seriously half waggishly called "Second Renaissance", that it is an interesting case, the diagnosis of which would properly lead us into the fields of national history and national psychology. And let us add this much more—that after the consideration and definition of a few words we should agree to place the fifty eight year old retired schoolteacher, Adolfo Albertazzi, toward the head of the list of "young" Italians but not of youthful Italians.

As for his own opinion concerning *i giovani*, Albertazzi prefers to remain silent, with the enigmatic smile so often assumed by the mediocre to the exasperation of the inquirer, but which is fully understood and appreciated when the ability and good intentions of the smiler are proved. For Albertazzi wishes well to his little brothers.

In the serenity of his country home at Castel San Pietro near Bologna, his birthplace, he has written his

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"Confessione di un Novelliere Romagnolo" in which he describes the difficulties of his early days, and his discouraging attempts to publish his first novel (although it was acclaimed by his master Carducci as "containing souls"). He mentions the authors whom he liked and copied (Manzoni, Leopardi, and Maupassant) and, in short, confesses all those humiliating details which only a writer who is sure of his reputation dares to make known. A patriarch, but a vigorous one, he presents to younger writers the secret of his literary art which, like the humbler art of his ancestors, is accomplished "with decision in action, with concision in speech, with simplicity of heart, with the humility of a joyous and dolorous life, with the conscious strength of passion, with the robustness of one's muscles and voice, with the light of one's soul."

Pyrotechnics! one thinks at first. Such "secrets" are as old as the first successful man. And yet the proof of an author is in the reading, and the reading of Albertazzi shows him to be no pyrotechnist.

He has written the following volumes of short stories: "Vecchie Storie d'Amore"; "Amore e Amore"; "Novelle Umoristiche"; "Il Zucchetto Rosso"; "Il Diavolo nell' Ampolla"; "Faccie Allegre"; "A Stare al Mondo"; "Sotto il Sole"; and "Top".

In this large number of stories, many of which have been repeated in the later volumes however, we have that diversity of incidents and characters, that natural conflict of desires and of persons, that ever present contrast of joy and sorrow, which, being presented with sober psychological insight, make great literature. Many of his plots are original, but his real and valuable originality lies in the word or phrase which reveals another story, and another, and another —in short, human existence (and animal existence, too, for his animals have many important parts to play).

Adopting that interesting and perhaps ultimate view of life in which the contemplation of either joy or sorrow evokes a smile, let us examine one characteristic smile of Albertazzi, the indulgent and helpless smile at the defeat of man's hopes and man's will by circumstances or fate.

In "A Sant' Elpidio" a young girl, full of hope, goes to an isolated hamlet in the mountains to teach school. Considered as being too young and beautiful, she is looked upon with suspicion by the village women, especially by her landlady, a widow whose whole life is devoted to an only son. He is strong and handsome but a brute in all things, and arouses only disgust in the schoolteacher. She avoids him, and thus wins the confidence of the mother. The son is killed in a drunken fight, the lamentations of the mother are wild, and the young girl decides to leave the village. The mother seems to read the decision in the girl's mind, and soon her wailing ceases; she smiles, and sings. And one evening with tears in her eyes and with profound affection she murmurs: "The Lord is good. He has taken my son but has given me a daughter. You *are* my daughter, aren't you?"

The opening lines of the story are thus made clear:

> "And what about Elena Baschi who was so intelligent and beautiful?"
> "Still up in the mountains, at Sant' Elpidio where she went teaching for the first time."
> "Married?"
> "No."

The bare plot is that. Albertazzi, we have it on good authority, creates

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souls. We need say nothing more.

There is "La Casta Susanna" with its study of feminine modesty; there is "Amore e Amore", an analysis of the feelings of a young man and a woman before their marriage; and there is "Il Leardo", a fanciful romance of the past; each with its endless variety of smiles, almost always with some touch of irony.

Has Albertazzi no faults? He can be too sentimental, as in "Il Cane dello Zio Prospero"; he can be too whimsical and shallow as in "Nell' Anno XX della Re-So-Eu" (European Social Republic).

His best short story? It may be "Le Viole", a description with wonderful purity and beauty of that symbolic natural phenomenon in which the idea and presence of death awaken latent or dormant sexual emotions, a study more subtle and more effective than the treatment of the same theme by D'Annunzio in one of his "Novelle della Pescara".

HARRY DEFERRARI

German Books and Magazines Revive

THE stabilization of German currency, the return of the so called "gold mark", has had a most healthy effect upon the German book trade. Literature begins to lift its head and flower again. Instead of books appearing with a "base price", which the buyer must multiply with an incredible number of noughts in order to arrive at the momentary cost, they are now able to have a fixed mark price and the fantastically grotesque *milliarden* days are over. Numberless German authors, however, lament the change, for they had built up connections with Switzerland, Czecho-Slovakia, Poland, and other German speaking countries, and lived in comparative comfort on a couple of francs or crowns, thanks to the astronomic figures of the rate of exchange.

The return to normality has also put new life into the magazines, or caused various new ones to brave publicity. The Ernst Rowohlt Verlag, Berlin, has just published the first number of "Vers und Prosa", a magazine which intends to make a serious attempt to create a home for the younger literature, for creative efforts in verse and prose which might otherwise, under present difficult conditions, never see the light of day. The first number contains contributions, among others, from Wolfgang Goetz, Alfons Paquet, Otto Flake, and Arnold Bronnen.

The publishing house of Paul Steegemann, Hanover, issues a brilliant little weekly "Störtebeker", critical, ironic, rather in the style of the Berlin "Tagebuch". Claus Störtebeker was a famous freebooter king whose fleets terrorized the ships of the Hanseatic merchants at the close of the fourteenth century. He was a kind of Robin Hood of the seas, obeying a primitive communism and sharing the booty equally with all his crew. The proud motto of the clan was "God's friend—all the world's enemy!" Publisher Steegemann claims descent from this old freebooter—rather a dangerous acknowledgment for one of his profession!

It is curious that two of the great successes of the publishing season are translations—books by foreigners—Americans: Frank Harris's "Life of Oscar Wilde" (S. Fischer, Berlin) and, if I may so, "Das Land Gottes, Gesicht des neuen Amerika" (God's Own Country, the Face of the New America) by Herman George Schef-

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fauer, published by the aforesaid Paul Steegemann, Hanover.

The "Literarische Zentralblatt" has just entered upon its seventy fifth year. Founded in 1850 by the Germanist Frederik Zarncke, the paper is still edited by his son Eduard Zarncke. It has consistently followed out the plan of the founder—to review as soon as possible after publication every book of scientific interest, even those published abroad being mentioned, as far as they are of interest to German scientists. In its very first year the paper began to attract the most eminent men of the day as contributors, and its list after twenty five years was a record of all the prominent men of the time. The financial stress of the last few years has played evilly with the paper, which was forced to sink from a weekly into a fortnightly and then into a monthly, but was kept by the devoted editor and publishers from utter extinction. Its seventy fifth anniversary sees it entering upon brighter days. It is to make an alliance with the Deutsche Bücherei in Leipzig, the German equivalent of the British Museum Library and Reading Room, is to be reorganized so as to conform once more to the founder's plan of noting every important work upon publication, is to appear as a weekly as soon as conditions in the publishing world of scientific works again make it desirable. Eduard Zarncke remains editor, Dr. Wilhelm Frels, the librarian of the Deutsche Bücherei, is to edit the bibliographical section. All new books in every branch of science and techniques are to be noted within three weeks of publication.

A cry of shame and despair went through the German press recently when it became known that this same Deutsche Bücherei, a magnificent white Colosseum-like building, erected as late as 1913 and already containing a remarkably comprehensive collection of German books, was to shut the doors of its reading rooms—for lack of funds to support the officials! Coming so late in the day to the task of collecting the national literature, the Deutsche Bücherei had the advantage of profiting by the experiences of other national libraries and, provided with ample funds and aided by bibliophilic donations and bequests, soon became a gloriously housed representative collection. Its reading room, ideally fitted with the most modern technical comfort, became the mecca of all German writers and scholars. Fortunately the outcry sufficed to bring the rich Leipzig merchants to a sense of their duty, and a small paragraph in the paper a few days later assured the world that "a way had been found" to ensure the continued existence of the Deutsche Bücherei. The reading rooms are still closed but "it is hoped" that they will soon be reopened.

Some kindly Mæcenas of art has presented the publisher Gustav Kiepenheuer, Potsdam, with a sum of money to enable him to offer his beautiful magazine "Das Kunstblatt" to needy artists, students, and art institutes at an enormously reduced price. A pretty form of charity.

The fiftieth anniversary of the death of Hoffmann von Fallersleben is being celebrated by an exhibition of literary reminiscences of the fine old poet, who is hailed as one of the earliest fighters for German freedom and unity. The peaceful, free souled man must many a time have turned in his grave to think that his most popular lyric, "Deutschland über Alles", which he meant as a sentimental song for all Germans, should

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be hailed as a chauvinistic, nationalistic anthem. Well, Francis Scott Key is suffering something of the same fate—in these days of piping hot "peace".

A well known Leipzig bibliophile, Ernst Schulz-Besser, poking about in a Hanoverian autograph collector's treasures which had lain untouched for many years, chanced upon a find which has excited the literary world. This is a new ballad by Schiller, unfortunately incomplete, but a beautiful fragment. It is the beginning of a long romance, the plan of which was among Schiller's papers under the title "The Troubadour, or the Wandering Singer".

G. K. Chesterton's "Magic" is to be performed in Berlin; Shaw's "Androcles and the Lion" is running; and Synge's "Playboy of the Western World". Georg Büchner, the young genius of *Sturm und Drang* days, after long years of neglect following upon his early death and the reactionary years that followed the War of Freedom in 1813, came into his own after the German Revolution of 1918. "Danton's Tod", that great epic of revolution, has been played on all German stages and now the Insel Verlag of Leipzig has issued Büchner's complete works and letters in a beautiful edition on thin paper. At the same time appears an authoritative book on Büchner's literary position by Heinz Lipmann — "Georg Büchner und die Romantik" (Max Hueber, Munich), which very interestingly classifies Büchner with Heine and "Münchhausen" Immermann as belonging to the transition period between the romantic and classic age and the modern political era.

A Professor Wilhelm Dörpfeld, who has just celebrated his seventieth birthday, has devoted his life to the study of Homer. These studies have led him to the conclusion that both the Iliad and the Odyssey were mutilated and altered by the wandering singers of the t nth to the sixth century B. C. He believes that he has been able to reconstruct the two wonderful old epics according to the original plan, and intends to publish his version of the Odyssey, a free translation without hexameters, under the title of "The Song of the Return of Odysseus".

The Strindberg Prize, presented every year on the anniversary of the dramatist's birth to the work which is considered by the founder to have contributed most to the spirit of internationalism, was awarded this year to the Dante expert Dr. Karl Federn for his "Dante und seine Zeit". It was the seventy fifth birthday. Strindberg's official translator, Emil Schering, and his beautiful American wife gave a festival at which much of literary Berlin was present, and at which Dr. Federn read two chapters of his masterly book.

Two new books on Strindberg treat this enigmatic personality more from the pathological medical point of view. H. Jasper's book considers also Swedenborg, Hölderlin, and Van Gogh, whereas Storck's "August Strindberg im Lichte seiner Selbstbiographie", published by Bergmann, Munich, devotes itself entirely to the personality of the great Swede.

Alexander Moszkowski's new book "Der Venuspark" (Fontane, Berlin) is a singular volume, a series of brilliant dialogues surrounded with a thin thread of story. A professor goes to Cyprus, where a neo-Greek colony for exquisite refinement of life is supposed to exist, to help in temple excavations. He falls into a kind of

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dream trance, in which all the persons whose acquaintance he has made are changed into their Greek equivalents — Diogenes, Zeuxis, Aristotle, Hippocrates, Lais and Aspasia, Æsop, Democritus, and many another great name of old. They meet in brilliant discussions, and yet are conscious of their reincarnation and discuss the theory of relativity with quotations from Dante; ride in autos and such delightful anachronisms to illustrate the theory of the pure relativity of time. Moszkowski makes the mistake of expecting the reader to remember the double personality of these neo-Greeks; he would have done better to keep to his occasional method of hyphenating — Gryllus-Gregory — Liane-Lais. There are pleasant romantic-erotic interludes—such as the Pygmalion-Galatea story of the Lais statue—but as a whole the book is rather a compendium of popularized philosophy than a novel.

The Wegweiser Verlag, that magnified book club, has issued two exquisite picture books for its subscribers—"Menzel auf Reisen", charming extracts from the great black and white artist's traveling sketch books, and "Goethe's Parklandschaften", a portfolio of sepia and blue paper sketches by Goethe in and about his country cottage—placid, rolling Thuringian scenery, drawn quite in the conventional fashion of the time. The moonlight scenes are more original, and might have been the work of an artist of today. Lighter moments of great men—always pleasing to the ordinary mortal!

One of the best of the German monthlies is "Die Neue Rundschau" (S. Fischer, Berlin). In a recent number a long new romantic narrative poem by Gerhart Hauptmann naturally aroused interest. The poem is really one which would have passed unnoticed but for the famous signature. In this number are also some quotations from an amazing new work, which in clearest and most comprehensible form brings order out of the chaos of the world's history from the beginnings of Christianity to the present, Count Richard N. Coudenhove-Kalergi's "Krise der Weltanschauung" (Paneuropa Verlag, Vienna). In crisp, crystalline sentences the author traces the development of thought and its various crises, collapses, and rebirths. He prophesies the coming of a new superethic—the creed of heroism and beauty, an amalgamation of the ideals of Goethe and Nietzsche.

ETHEL TALBOT SCHEFFAUER

Notes from France

PAUL MORAND'S first novel, "Lewis et Irène" (Grasset), might have been called "Twentieth Century Limited". No writer, more completely than Morand in his previous books of stories and in this novel, has stood with both feet on twentieth century ground and used his twentieth century typewriter to turn out 100% twentieth century psychology. Others, of course, have made use of the "modern" setting—fast liners, banks, and switchboard—and treated of "up to date" problems like money, love, etc.; but always, it seems to me, with one eye on the past, for comparison. Their modernism is ever between quotation marks. When they take us into the present life of nations and individuals, they are travelers. Morand is a resident. He "belongs". And yet he is so thoroughly French in his sensibilities, that one might

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build a whole theory of France's capacity for adjustment upon Morand's efficiency in naming, qualifying, choosing among the elements of the new era, testing their solidity and their promises.

Much less destructive, cruel, acid, and negative than "Ouvert la Nuit" and "Fermé la Nuit", much less dependent upon the disintegration of old standards, this book presents the new ones—at their present stage of development. Its hero and heroine might be regarded as the Adam and Eve of this new era. Both are splendid business people, who practise sport, love power, and know thoroughly how to make use of it. She is chaste and he isn't, but that makes no capital difference. She is of old Greek blood and he is a modern type of mongrel, therefore has more trouble in finding out what he wants. So has our twentieth century. . . .

The Nouvelle Revue Française republishes "Le Vin Blanc de la Villette" by Jules Romains, which is pretty good reading for those who want a direct, humorous, robust introduction to the popular and authentic aspects of Paris—the remotest possible one from the Paris visited or revisited and finally transfigured by tourists. The quais de la Villette are a long, long way from the rue de Castiglione.

Vivid stories of the gipsies in the south of France are presented by Valère Bernard in his book "Les Bohémiens", which is prefaced by Louis Bertrand, the author of the much discussed "Louis XIV". One remembers that not very far from Marseilles, around the little church of the Saintes-Maries-de-la-Mer, a yearly pilgrimage of gipsies from all parts of Europe gathers the strangest people for the worship of St. Mary the Egyptian who landed there, according to legend.

Abel Hermant's last book is likely to overcome the continued resistance to his election at the French Academy. "Xavier" is a series of talks on French grammar, which the distinguished author of "La Carrière" has made as attractive as any of his best stories. With all the differences that exist between the Renaissance and our days, there is something of Cennino Cennini's Book of the Art about Abel Hermant's subtle presentation of French linguisitic casuistry. Need we add that "all students of French letters should read it"? No, we need not.

Frédéric Lefèvre is an editor of the clever weekly paper "Les Nouvelles Littéraires", which we have mentioned before, and its official interviewer. In a book called "Une Heure avec. . ." (Nouvelle Revue Française) he gathers these interviews, which are out of the ordinary. A strange feature about them is that instead of asking Paul Bourget what he takes for breakfast and Anatole France his opinion about bobbed hair or preaching through wireless, Frédéric Lefèvre seems to get from his heroes the best that can be obtained in an hour's talk. This book has a real value as current history of French literature.

PIERRE DE LANUX

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THE BOOKMAN'S LITERARY CLUB SERVICE

Believing that clubs will welcome an outline which combines range of subject with an authoritative understanding of the end to be achieved, the editors have brought together representative committees of authors, students, and critics to present for the use of women's clubs an outline which will contain both elements. The divisions of the series are: I. Contemporary American Fiction (see THE BOOKMAN *for October, November, December, 1922, January 1923); II. Contemporary American Poetry (see* THE BOOKMAN *for March, April, May, June, July, August, 1923; III. Contemporary American Drama; IV. The Short Story. After contemporary American literature has been covered, programs on the historical background of our literature will be given and these will be followed by a survey of the English field.*

The BOOKMAN *programs are formed, not by the editors of this magazine but by a board of advice which has been organized to include names from various lines of literary thought in America, so that the result will represent no one group. The executive committee of advice is as follows: Mary Austin, the novelist; Dr. Arthur E. Bostwick, librarian of the St. Louis Public Library; Dr. Carl Van Doren, one of the editors of "The Century"; Mrs. L. A. Miller, chairman of literature, General Federation of Women's Clubs; May Lamberton Becker, of the "Reader's Guide" of the New York "Evening Post"; Dr. Joseph Fort Newton, rector of the Church of the Divine Paternity, New York City; Booth Tarkington, the novelist; and Rose V. S. Berry, chairman of the fine arts committee, General Federation of Women's Clubs.*

The Editor of THE BOOKMAN *and his advisers and associates will answer promptly and to the best of their ability any question confronting any literary club. Such questions should be addressed "*THE BOOKMAN'S *Literary Club Service".*

THE BOOKMAN'S outline of contemporary drama, which began in the November issue, consists of studies of the following playwrights:

November: Augustus Thomas, Owen Davis, Edward Sheldon, Eugene O'Neill.

December: Susan Glaspell, Zoe Akins, Rachel Crothers, Alice Brown, Zona Gale.

January: Louis K. Anspacher, Charles Rann Kennedy, Lewis Beach, George Cram Cook, Theodore Dreiser, Gilbert Emery, Arthur Richman, Algernon Tassin.

February: James Forbes, David Belasco, Eugene Walter, Elmer Rice, Jesse Lynch Williams, George M. Cohan.

March: Avery Hopwood, Langdon Mitchell, George Scarborough, J. Hartley Manners, George Ade, Mary Roberts Rinehart.

The committee has met several difficulties in preparing this outline. In the first place, there are innumerable dramatists whose work should be examined for an understanding of the real theatre of America. Then, how should these dramatists be divided? After various classifications had proved unsatisfactory, the committee decided upon a purely arbitrary division.

A word of warning. Many clubs when they study the drama are likely to stick closely to what is generally known as "closet" drama, often historical or poetical dramas by intellectuals of one sort or another whose plays have seldom been produced with success. We urge you not to sniff at the commercial theatre. It is, after all, the root of drama. If you would understand the technique of the theatre, you must know Avery Hopwood and George M. Cohan as well as Eugene O'Neill and Percy MacKaye.

For each of the following dramatists we give a selected list of his published plays, as well as the names of any easily procurable magazine articles dealing with him and his work. As a general bibliography the following books are suggested:

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Our American Theatre. Oliver M. Sayler. BRENTANO.
The British and American Drama of To-day. Barrett H. Clark. HOLT.
The Changing Drama. Archibald Henderson. STEWART KIDD.
The Modern Drama. Ludwig Lewisohn. HUEBSCH.
The Drama and the Stage. Ludwig Lewisohn. HARCOURT, BRACE.
The Twentieth Century Theatre. William Lyon Phelps. MACMILLAN.
Seen on the Stage. Clayton Hamilton. HOLT.
The Theatre of Tomorrow. Kenneth Macgowan. BONI, LIVERIGHT.

Anthologies

Chief Contemporary Dramatists, First and Second Series. Thomas H. Dickinson. HOUGHTON MIFFLIN.
Representative American Plays. Arthur Hobson Quinn. CENTURY.
Contemporary American Plays. Arthur Hobson Quinn. SCRIBNER.
Representative Plays by American Dramatists, Volume Three. Montrose J. Moses. DUTTON.
Longer Plays by Modern Authors (American). Helen Louise Cohen. HARCOURT, BRACE.
Modern American Plays. George P. Baker. HARCOURT, BRACE.

CONTEMPORARY AMERICAN DRAMA

Committee: Kenneth Macgowan, Chairman; Owen Davis, Jesse Lynch Williams, Alexander Woollcott.

Sixth Group

GEORGE S. KAUFMAN AND MARC CONNELLY

Dulcy. Included in *Longer Plays by Modern Authors.* Also published by PUTNAM, and by FRENCH.

To the Ladies! Included in *Contemporary American Plays.* Also published by FRENCH.

At present writing these young manufacturers of satirical comedy can scarcely be considered separately. George S. Kaufman is of the dramatic department of the New York "Times". He was born at Pittsburg, educated in the public schools, and has been at one time or another on the staffs of various papers. Marc Connelly is also a newspaperman, although for the last few years he has been a free lance writer, and a frequent contributor to the humorous magazines. He was born at McKeesport, Pennsylvania, and was educated at Trinity Hall School.

These two young men are definitely associated with the smart columnist circle of New York. Their recent play "Beggar on Horseback" is a fine piece of experimental satire.

"Finally I wish to praise the authors of 'Beggar on Horseback' most heartily for this, that they laugh at fatuousness and gross materialism, at triviality of mind and soul, at stubborn stupidity and dishonor no longer conscious of itself, not as these qualities are contrasted with some specious moralistic idealism, but as they are contrasted with art, with the eternal creative spirit, with the quest of him who is driven despite himself to pursue that beauty which is also truth. This central motivation they found, of course, in the original of Paul Apel. But I am glad that they dared so fully and explicitly to keep it in their American version.

"I must not neglect to mention the 'Morning-Evening', a four-page newspaper distributed to the audience during, at least, the early performances of 'Beggar on Horseback'. In this quite precious travesty of a contemporary yellow sheet, prepared exclusively for morons, the mentality of both the makers and the consumers of such printed matter is exhibited and excoriated with a touch that is among the best and most promising and most wholesome things in American letters."—Ludwig Lewisohn, NATION, February 27, 1924.

"It is a funny play ['To the Ladies!']; but it is also a big play in that it applies the bright edge of satire to a few of the most popular idiocies which all good citizens are expected to exalt."—Kenneth Andrews, BOOKMAN, May, 1922.

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"'Dulcy' is a breezy comment on the here and now, as up to the minute as the column in this morning's newspaper, and in general content it covers much the same ground. It is a haphazard sort of play into which the authors have tossed a glittering array of bright odds and ends, plucked at random from the life about us. This lack of coherent dramatic plan at least has the virtue of leaving the playwrights free to take a fling at whatever occurs to them. A number of things occur to them. As the evening goes on their fancy moves in wider and wider circles until the play really becomes a robust and rather sweeping satire of manners—one of the first and one of the best to reach our stage in many seasons."—Kenneth Andrews, BOOKMAN, October, 1921.

GEORGE MIDDLETON

Masks, and Other One Act Plays. HOLT.
The Road Together. HOLT.
Polly with a Past and *Adam and Eva* (with Guy Bolton). HOLT.

A collaborator in numerous plays, Mr. Middleton has also written many of his own, among them some of our most practical one act dramas. He was born at Paterson, New Jersey, and was graduated from Columbia University. He has always made playwriting his profession. While he has spent much time in London, he maintains his home in New York City.

"His strength is in his ideas. He has thought justly and forcibly; he is clear where others are muddled, and collected where others are confused. What prevents Mr. Middleton's work a little from fulfilling one's highest expectations of it is his dialogue. This weakness, one should add, is not wholly personal to Mr. Middleton. We have little folk speech."—Review of *Masks,* NATION, May 22, 1920.

"In all the six plays ['Masks, and Other One Act Plays'], the trained hand of the practical theatre artist is evidenced in the stage directions and the conductment of the action; a feeling for scene, for character, and for the climax which is the necessary evolution of the development can be detected in each and all. One feels that these little cross-sections of life not only read well, but will also act well. A sense of 'curtain' is never absent. Mr. Middleton has long since acquired a technique which gives one a comfortable assurance of right handling and economy of resources. Of his work it can be said that it is at once literary, and practical stage material; this is as it should be. Both by gift and diligence he has made himself an *homme du théâtre;* he should be welcomed by readers of sound drama, and acted by both amateurs and professionals of the playhouse." —Richard Burton, BOOKMAN, June, 1920.

REFERENCES:

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More Plays by George Middleton. Richard Burton, BOOKMAN, June, 1920.

GEORGE KELLY

The Torch-Bearers. American Library Service.

The author of the satirical burlesque, "The Torch-Bearers", and of "The Show-Off", currently considered one of our best comedies, has had a strenuous apprenticeship in stagecraft, having played both in vaudeville and on the legitimate stage as a juvenile leading man and as a headliner in his own sketches. He was born in Philadelphia, where he still lives, and was for the most part privately educated.

"Mr. Kelly has got hold of something in our American life, and often he has seen it for himself and not as Broadway expects him to see it. In the same way most of his characters talk for their own and not their Broadway selves."—Stark Young, NEW REPUBLIC, September 20, 1922.

"Now comes George Kelly with a play about the other fifty per cent of the population: those who take the theatre too seriously. However, Mr. Kelly, happily, does not take his public seriously. Possibly no one who has served time in vaudeville could. In his play, 'The Torch-Bearers', no time is wasted on a story. No concessions are made to the naïve conventions of those earnest souls who (he may have hoped) would be attracted to his play by its sonorous title. Mr. Kelly set himself to write a funny play, and stuck to his job.

"He turned out a gorgeous piece of foolishness. It is Stephen Leacock or Robert Benchley on the stage. Not in many years has there been a full length play in which that rare quality of giddy burlesque has been sustained at such high pitch throughout an evening. One's mind goes back to the sketch 'For Pity's Sake' which was included in a musical show a season or two ago, or to the episode in one of the 'Follies' when W. C. Fields exhibited himself as a

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trick billiard expert. But those supremely comic bits were only bits. Here we have the same sort of thing for nearly three acts."—Kenneth Andrews, BOOKMAN, November, 1922.

PHILIP BARRY

You and I. BRENTANO.

Philip Barry was born at Rochester, New York, June 18, 1896. He was graduated from Yale University in 1919. It was there that his first play was presented. After graduation he wrote advertising copy for a time, then went to Harvard where he took the workshop course in playwriting under Professor George Pierce Baker. "You and I" was awarded the Harvard drama prize in 1922. His next play, "Poor Richard", is scheduled for early production. Mr. Barry now lives near New York City; but it is understood that he owns a home in France and will spend much of his time there.

"Here, as in the case of 'Icebound', the author has intended to write a tragi-comedy, and the public has warmly accepted the product as comedy. 'You and I' is the story of Maitland White, who wanted to be an artist but became a business man to support his wife, and who sees his own son facing the same problem and sacrifices himself again for the sake of the ambitious offspring. The plot, which is a little tidy, is not quite good enough to support the excellent idea. But no comedy dialogue quite so good as Mr. Barry's has come to my ears this season."—John Farrar,BOOKMAN, May, 1923.

"There is cleverness in this play, and a good deal of underlying wisdom. It is authentic and it is competent. I find that it does not progress so unflinchingly to its conclusion as does 'Icebound'. It is just a little tricked out and padded. Its excellent slang dialogue dates it. However, these are minor considerations, are they not? You will enjoy reading this play."—John Farrar, BOOKMAN, September, 1923.

FRANK CRAVEN

The First Year. (Not yet available.)

Frank Craven was born of theatrical parents; both his father and his mother were playing with the Nat Goodwin-Eliza Weathersby company when Mr. Craven was born. Young Mr. Craven played his first part in "The Silver King" when he was three. From the ages of five to eighteen he worked on and around a farm in New England and attended school. At eighteen he went back to the stage, curiously enough in "The Silver King". His great stage success came in 1911 in the role of Jimmy Gilley in "Bought and Paid For".

The first plays he attempted to write were not successful; but his current success, "The First Year", in which he is himself acting, is considered by many persons to be one of our finest native comedies. When Mr. Craven closes that play he intends to retire from the speaking stage and devote his time to the writing and producing of plays.

"Quietly, modestly, with none of the preliminary boasting which is so often the work of the weaker psychologists of the theatre, a little homespun comedy sneaked into New York this season and established itself overnight as one of the best, if not the best, ever written by an American. It is called "The First Year" and is the work of Frank Craven. He has fashioned for himself a piece so unpretentious, so true, and so charmingly amusing that it will find a response and welcome in every American town that is big enough to have a theatre at all."—Alexander Woolcott, EVERYBODY'S, February, 1921.

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Sketch. Alexander Woollcott. EVERYBODY'S, February, 1921.
Sketch. THEATRE MAGAZINE, September, 1917.
Interview. NEW YORK DRAMATIC MIRROR, September 30, 1916.
Work of Frank Craven. W. P. Dodge. THEATRE, June, 1914.

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THE GOSSIP SHOP

WE are now asking for a list of books from our readers. Every magazine we can think of has made lists — why not make ours? What ten books have most influenced your life? Honest, now! You realize, don't you, that it is quite possible that a Plane Geometry or a Third Reader should be numbered among them? Here is our list:

1. Shakespeare's plays
2. Pilgrim's Progress
3. Norse Legends (Andrew Lang)
4. Les Miserables
5. Tristram Shandy
6. The Jungle Books
7. Graustark
8. Shelley's poems
9. The Odyssey
10. Mother Goose

Our lady secretary submits this list:

1. Poems by James Whitcomb Riley and Eugene Field
2. A Tale of Two Cities
3. The Little Colonel series
4. Mr. Britling and Joan and Peter
5. Pride and Prejudice
6. Fathers and Children
7. Leaves of Grass
8. Hayes's Contemporary European History
9. Chekhov's plays
10. Crime and Punishment

We apologize both to M. Gurdjieff and to Mr. Orage. The caricature which illustrated our account last month of the activities of the Institute Gurdjieff was labeled by the Russian name, when, alas, it was intended to represent the famous English critic. Speaking of caricatures, Gene Markey, with his scarf, his cane, and his fatherly air, has recently been in New York City. We wish that he would stay here. Why so attractive a young man should prefer to write short stories and dance his way into the hearts of the ladies in Chicago rather than along Fifth Avenue, is difficult to fathom. We met too, the other day, the pleasant James Young, on the editorial staff of "The American Legion Weekly". He is a gentleman much interested in books, whose opinions of them are interesting. Our main discussion was concerning the popularity or non-popularity of war books — and the sum and substance of our feeling was that matters now have come to a point where everything depends on the book itself, that the war background has very little to do with popularity or unpopularity in fiction or on the stage.

"Folio", published by a group of New York artists, musicians, and writers, is an interesting experiment. It is composed of separate pages, each contributor being responsible for his or her own page. The artists of "Folio" have entire freedom: they own it, sponsor it, and pay for it themselves. Among the contributors to the first number were William Gropper, Alfred Kreymborg, Edwin Seaver, Harold Vinal, Maurice Sterne, Art Young, etc. I like best Gropper's fiendishly clever caricature of Wall Street. A facsimile of the financial sheet of a newspaper forms the background, upon which is outlined the buildings. An original and ironic conception, don't you think? Art Young's "Buccaneer" is good, and Countée P. Cullen's poem, "Blues Singer". Comes, too, a poetry magazine from Baltimore, "The Circle". It seems to be modeled on the lines of "Contemporary Verse"

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and is edited by Leacy Naylor Green-Leach and others.

"The Story of Boxing" by Trevor C. Wignall is a book, with thirty two illustrations, which gives considerable pleasure to followers of the art. On page 307 we find the following comforting assurance:

> I hold the opinion that in a year or so there will be many new champions. The Old Guard are getting on in years, and they cannot last much longer. Prognostics are always perilous, but there are grounds for assuming that the fly-weight title will go either to Villa or Genaro, the light-weight title to Tendler or Tremaine, the middle-weight title to Greb or Todd, the light heavy-weight title to McTigue or Bloomfield, and the heavy-weight title to Louis Angel Firpo or Harry Wills.
>
> The safest prophecy of all is that American fighters will win at least six of the eight.

The luncheons of the Dutch Treat Club are often occasions of hearty enjoyment. We can think of no better one to describe than that at which Roland Pertwee, a young English author who was once an actor, told us some stories, and Gertrude Lawrence and Beatrice Lillie of "André Charlot's Revue" sang us songs. It was a privilege to watch the dignified Frederick A. Stokes dissolve in laughter. Here were denizens of the worlds of art, journalism, and letters: Ring Lardner along with Grantland Rice and Lawrence Perry, three writers of much masculinity. Rupert Hughes, returned from the coast, speaking briefly and with his usual brilliance. Albert Payson Terhune, of great size and vigor; William Johnston, also of vigor and size (he has just written the text for H. T. Webster's delightful book of cartoons on bridge, called "Webster's Bridge"). We glimpse F. Scott Fitzgerald, looking younger than ever; Ray Long, jovial and prosperous, George Barr McCutcheon, J. O'H. Cosgrave, George Mallon, etc., etc. The ladies from England were loath to entertain, for they had come without accompanist; but when local talent in the shape of Jay Fasset and Gene Lockhart had warmed the atmosphere, they arose and nobly did their bit. Is the great popularity of these two young women due to the fact that young women usually have no sense of humor at all, at all, and these two have a great deal? We wonder. At any rate, we trust that they will *never* return to Merrie England.

Ralph Hodder-Williams, brother of Sir Ernest Hodder-Williams, C. V. O., of the English publishing firm Hodder and Stoughton, has written a regimental history of "Princess Patricia's Canadian Light Infantry, 1914-1919". The book has a foreword by Lady Patricia Ramsay and an introduction by Lieutenant Colonel A. Hamilton Gault. Lieutenant Hodder-Williams, M. C., M. A., was a former officer of the regiment and associate professor of history at the University of Toronto. Writing of the book in the London "Bookman", Lieutenant Colonel F. E. Whitton, C. M. G., says:

> The first unit from Canada to take the field in the Great War, the record of the Patricias is one of great and heroic deeds. Its story has been told superlatively well by Mr. Hodder-Williams. The history is worthy of the regiment, and no higher praise than that can possibly be given. Owing to its high state of efficiency the Patricias were able to start their campaigning with the minimum of preliminary training, and it was accordingly inserted in the 27th Division which came from India and was sent to France in December, 1914. In 1915 it was transferred from the 80th British to the 7th Canadian Brigade. Owing to its unique composition drafts to repair wastage were at first a difficulty, but the difficulty was surmounted by the arrival of companies from the Canadian Universities. Through this channel some 1,200 officers and men reached the Patricias between August, 1915, and the end of the following year.

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The superb supply thus yielded saved the regiment from practical extinction after the Battle of Bellewaerde on May 8th, 1915, when the Patricias had nearly 400 casualties. Incidentally it was these students who beat the Württembergers in Sanctuary Wood on June 2nd, 1916.

At Edna Ferber's the other evening we saw two splendid things, among many splendid things. One was William Allen White listening to Robert

William Allen White

Nathan play the piano. Mr. Nathan was playing bits of Debussy's "Afternoon of a Faun". Mr. White leaned over the piano in rapt attention. He is as much interested in music as he is in politics — more, we fancy. Edna Ferber whispered to us that she and Mr. White once went to a concert together, where they heard that enchanting composition. On the way home Mr. White said: "Why don't you write a story called 'The Afternoon of a Faun'?" — and there resulted our favorite short story. The other splendid thing was to behold Dr. Henry Canby become really excited. True, he often used to become excited in the days when he was teaching us the short story at Yale, but this time he was very excited indeed. "Certain dramatic critics", he said, "should be suppressed by law!" Whereupon there ensued a strenuous roasting of modern criticism such as it has never been our lot to hear. Dr. Canby objects to a critic's saying that "Antony and Cleopatra" is a bad play when he admits that he has never read the play — only seen a modern performance of it. He objects, too, to statements such as "'Saint Joan' is a better play than Shakespeare ever wrote", or words to that effect. Later, we heard him congratulating Miss Ferber on her new novel, and telling her that he believed the advent of our best short story writers into the long fiction field meant that there would soon be great development in American fiction.

We are going to start a column concerning absurd books. Ordinarily we have no wish to laugh at those who take the pains to write a book; but occasionally we cannot refrain. Take, for example, "My Literary House" by James Courtney Challiss. "Five rooms," says the jacket, "the sacred repositories of the heart-woven wares and fabrics of a poet, make up a literary house." The rooms are as follows: "Nature's Room", "The Children's Room", "The Room of Reflection and Dreams", "The Fun Room", and "Private Room (Knock Before Entering)". In the "Fun Room" we find:

SHE WAS RIGHT

"I'd kiss you, George, but oh, I fear—
I fear you love another."

"You're right. For with *one* kiss, my dear,
I'm *sure* I'd love another."

And here is a book called "Good Toasts and Funny Stories", edited by Arthur Leroy Kaser. We found, frankly, one or two funny stories; but the toasts . . . ! One to "Happiness":

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The United States: May she always wear that contented, though independent, smile.

This for "Sleep":

To Morpheus: May he let us sleep like a log, but not like a sawmill.

And one most appropriate:

Bores: May they bore themselves to death.

At the P. E. N. Club was Zoe Akins, the night after the opening of her new play "The Moon Flower". She was talking with Fannie Hurst who, clad in flaming scarlet, looked most effective. The election of Carl Van Doren to succeed Booth Tarkington as president of the United States section was announced. As hostess, and a most gracious one, appeared Gertrude Atherton, at her right Horace B. Liveright, her publisher. One saw Lee Wilson Dodd, Roland Holt, and Frieda Inescort discussing avidly theatrical matters; William Allen White, seeming a trifle bewildered away from his native Kansas; Mary Austin, well again after her recent serious illness; and many another. A story, told there by a certain famous lady editor, bears repeating and can scarcely shock intelligent readers of this publication. The lady, it seems, wrote an editorial dealing with certain problems of the love life. It appeared in a magazine of great national circulation. Whereupon she received a letter from a gentleman reader. "Isn't this a home magazine?" he asked. "I have been horrified by your editorial. I do not see that there is any place for sex in the home!"

The retrospective exhibition of John Sargent's paintings at the Grand Central Art Galleries is an event of historical importance, because Sargent is essentially the dominating *portratist* of our time. No amount of brilliance of style or virtuosity of technique alone would make this artist so important a figure if he had not possessed in addition that true and rare feeling of interpretative psychology in his portraiture. Such enthusiasts of modern painting as through ignorance and fear of being thought conservative sneer at Sargent as being outside the scope of their consideration, should stop to consider that there is no common ground of comparison or achievement between a great Sargent and a great Cézanne. Whatever the measure of divergence between Sargent and the Modernists, his supreme achievements will remain sufficient unto themselves as portraiture. . . . Of course it was all our own fault, there were many other good art exhibits in New York during February, but we saw only a few and missed out on Nicholas Fechin's and the Monet water lilies and several others that we particularly yearned to see. At the Montross Gallery were Marin's water colors; we lost our heart to the "Two-master at Rest". There is something about a ship which always "gets" one, whether its artist be a painter or Conrad or Masefield. In another room were paintings of China by Florence Waterbury. What a place China must be to paint in — the great wall, fantastic unfaded temples, and decorative gods. Why don't more artists go to China? So many art galleries have moved uptown that when one wants to go picture visiting nowadays one has to stay around the neighborhood of Fifty-seventh Street. At the Anderson Gallery was sculpture by Chester Beach, and paintings by Hayley Lever, Abbo Astrowsky, and W. Sherman Potts. Also some furniture collections, undoubtedly valuable, which our companion dismissed as "rococo". The Architectural League Exhibit has al-

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ways been a favorite of ours; it touches on so many different lines of work. This year it was not so crowded, one had a chance to see individual pieces. Ship models and candlesticks, hangings and tiles, murals and dishes distributed color everywhere among the garden sculpture, drawings, plans, and photographs. One photograph showed "approach signs" for the city of New Rochelle, designed by some of the well known artists who live there. Alas, that we yielded to the temptation of tea. As a result, there was left only time enough to glimpse the Jane Peterson exhibit at the Ehrich Gallery — much less of a visit than was deserved by the sunshiny canvases, painted as far apart as Venice and Gloucester (Massachusetts).

Young writers of first novels or writers of young novels spring up all about us. Here is John Wiley, whose brother Alec was in our class at college, writing a novel of Yale undergraduate life titled "The Education of Peter". Its viewpoint seems to us absurd, for it is well known that at no college is the literary man less frowned on than at Yale. Mr. Wiley seems to think that the intelligent young man has rather a struggle neath the elms. Well, he's certainly entitled to his own opinion. And we must admit that, in spite of some faulty writing, "The Education of Peter" is one of the best novels of undergraduate life that we have read. We saw young Mr. Wiley recently at a valentine party, where many games were played. He dances with abandon, and looks many years younger than he probably is, in a red paper cap. He is really of the younger generation — or the youngest generation, if you will — he is postwar. In his freshman year at Yale he was in the Officers' Training Camp — but it was only a mild touch. His is really the postwar attitude. Now Louis Bromfield, who wrote "The Green Bay Tree", is a different type entirely. Tall, nervous, volatile, his personality is immediately striking. His book, from all accounts, is charming, unmoral, dis-

Roger Burlingame

illusioned. Here speaks the war generation. Bromfield was with the French ambulance service, later in the American army. He returned to New York, wrote four or five novels, stowed them in his bureau drawer, and is now in the advertising department of Putnam's. Roger Burlingame of Scribner's is just a shade older. He is a quiet, humorful, discreet gentleman. In "You Too", his first novel, we find a different type of disillusionment from that of Mr. Bromfield or of Mr. Wiley. It is pleasant rather than irritating. Mr. Burlingame is vastly

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amused by what he has found life really is, although he strongly wishes that it were something else again. Here are three books that make a most interesting contrast.

The dinner of the Lucy Stone League at the Hotel Pennsylvania was a cordial affair, in spite of the fact that various ladies and gentlemen were scheduled to speak for or against ladies' keeping their own names after marriage. From the table where we sat, in a somewhat precarious position between Ruth Hale and Amy Lowell, we could see such ardent feminists as Margaret Wycherly, Christine Norman, Edna Ferber, Esther Root, etc., etc. Heywood Broun, admirably attired in the latest evening wear, defended the ladies gracefully. Miss Hale, in blue, put her case for the name as symbolical of one's individuality and therefore not to be changed; Miss Lowell, in blue also, spoke swiftly and with feeling. From the press accounts of this dinner one would think that it was a bitter affair; both ladies were sadly misquoted in several instances. We assure you that they parted more than good friends and that you cannot believe all you read in the papers. We congratulated Miss Lowell, incidentally, on her recent birthday (her fiftieth). This birthday and the disclosure of the fact that she is the author of "A Critical Fable", the anonymous poetical screed on contemporary American poetry, have led to the publication of many fine articles on the poet of Brookline. Among the best of these was an interview by William Whitman, 3rd in the Boston "Evening Transcript". In "A Critical Fable" Amy Lowell herself was one of twenty one poets considered, a list which Miss Lowell now says she would change only by the addition of Elinor Wylie. In answering the question, "Do you think it was wise to speak of yourself?", Miss Lowell is quoted by Mr. Whitman as saying:

> "I was in a quandary there. Mr. James Russell Lowell included himself in his 'Fable for Critics', probably for the same reason that I finally decided to include myself in this book, namely, for disguise. I felt that if I left myself out, that would be a dead giveaway; if I put myself in, the difficulty was to hit the happy medium between praise and blame. An excess either way would have tended to reveal my identity. All I can say is that when I got through I liked what I said about myself as little as the other poets liked what was said about them."
>
> "Wasn't it very awkward when people asked you who wrote it?"
>
> "It would have been very awkward if I had not discovered within myself depths of duplicity which I had no idea existed. I became a rival of Ananias in the way in which I denied authorship of that book."

We thought today that spring seemed in the air. It worried us; for we remembered with bitterness that last season we visited the country not once during the season of wild flowers and the coming of spring birds. Speaking of spring, there was recently a wedding in the BOOKMAN family. Elizabeth Cobb, daughter of Irvin Cobb, who was once a charming and useful member of our staff, was married to Frank Chapman, son of the ornithologist, Frank Michler Chapman. Now Mrs. Chapman's wedding has nothing to do with spring, for it was a snowy day; but her father-in-law's books have. We remember cutting jig saw puzzles in order to earn money enough to buy one of Mr. Chapman's bird guides. Mr. Cobb also confessed having gone to great lengths to make a similar purchase, although his method of acquiring the necessary funds differed from ours. It was a wedding to be remembered, with many of Mr. Cobb's associates in literature,

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publishing, and journalism present. We may state with pride that seldom have we seen a bride whose poise was so great as our former fashion editor's; we may further add that her apprenticeship in writing of the gowns and manners of authoresses—as well, doubtless, as the assistance of capable dressmakers — created a result which was altogether admirable. We shall attempt to evolve no new phrases — she was "a vision of loveliness" as the country newspaper would say.

The fourteenth national convention of the Drama League of America will be held in Pasadena, May 28-June 2. We quote from the announcement, which should be of particular interest to little theatre groups:

The chairman of the program committee for the assembly is Gilmor Brown, director of the Pasadena Community Playhouse, generally known as the country's most successful non-commercial or little theatre. It is putting all its facilities and experience back of the forthcoming conference, realizing that the whole movement can profit from the exchange of ideas at such a gathering.

It is understood that there are in excess of 350 amateur groups active in the United States, putting on plays. All of them are invited to send representatives to Pasadena to participate in the conference. Among the subjects to be considered are organization and management; plays suitable for non-professionals; staging, lighting and costuming; publicity, etc.

There will be two interesting exhibits under the direction of Alson S. Clark. One will illustrate the best work that is being done by the little, art and community theatres of the United States; the other will show what is being done along dramatic lines in the high schools and colleges of the country. These exhibits will consist of designs, models and photographs of stagecraft and be richly suggestive to all interested in producing plays.

Each evening during the convention, there is to be a performance in the Pasadena Community Playhouse by some representative Pacific Coast little theatre group. Discussions will be led by Lorado Taft, Sam Hume, Irving Pichel, Theodore B. Hinckley and many other well known workers in the modern American theatre.

We hear that Edna St. Vincent Millay, at her recent New York reading, was a rather unusual figure, in a loose green dress, with her short hair and her willowy gestures. She is said to have been most careful in her selection of love poems, which seems to us a pity. We did not hear her and are heartily sorry, for we are told by some that the reception accorded her was most amazing. Alas, we see few poets these days. It is quite true, of course, that there are few poets to see. Robert Roe, since the birth of his young daughter, has seldom visited town. He is apparently thoroughly fascinated by the young lady. David Morton called on us in his dignified manner and we found ourself looking forward with peculiar pleasure to reading his new book. We saw Arthur Guiterman on one of the muddiest days of the year,

Edna St. Vincent Millay

plowing through the wilds of Times Square. We envied Mr. Guiterman more than ever his genial smile, for he was wearing rubbers and we had forgotten ours. We saw William Rose

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Benét and his poet wife, Elinor Wylie, at "Fashion", which we were attending for the second time. There, too, were Mary Austin, Rea Irvin, Sidney Howard, to see his wife perform, and Bobby Jones, who seems still to laugh heartily over this pet child of his which is being such a success. The audience was cheering, stamping, and hissing at a great rate. It is worth coming many miles to be part of the crowd at this gayest of revivals, which is about to move to the Greenwich Village Theatre.

An interesting experiment in criticism was recently attempted by B. W. Huebsch. Mr. Huebsch, publisher of "Arlie Gelston" by Roger L. Sergel, offered free copies to a certain number of persons who would promise to send in reviews of the book. He now publishes in pamphlet form seventy three lay reviews. They come from Sweet Briar, Virginia, from Montgomery, Alabama, from Hamilton, Ontario. Glancing through the names, we recognize a few, notably Louis Fagon, once a pupil of ours at New York University. For shame, Louis—in the first paragraph of your review you do eight of the things we decided in class that a book reviewer shouldn't do. Here is the paragraph. See if you, gentle reader, can pick the eight sins.

It is a good book, full of intimate truth, written with stirring poetic beauty, and yet revealing in all its starkness the striking realities of Arlie Gelston's life. It moves simply, swiftly, and very naturally from scene to scene.

California ladies are generous with their news items. Here's one from Pauline Grace Hunt, of Los Gatos:

Wilbur Hall is now directing rehearsals for his sixth annual pageant that will include in the cast, as heretofore, all members of the artist colony located in the Cuestra De Los Gatos mountains. Three arrivals during the past year are Jessie Ackermann, Willa Hudson, and Charles Bell Emerson. Miss Ackermann, the world's most traveled woman, is a marvel in the eyes and consideration of all who come in contact with her. She is lecturing almost every day and night; besides putting in six and eight hours of study each day she manages to speak privately to clubs. Recently she was the honor guest at a luncheon of the Santa Clara County branch of the League of American Pen Women at the historic Lyndon Hotel in Los Gatos, and many things she said in confidence are to be used as guide-posts by the aspiring members. Despite the public's demands Miss Ackermann is finding time to write another book. It will bear the title "Beds I Have Slept In". Judging from her travels and the deep friendships she has had with the most noted people of the world, the volume will be highly instructive; and entertaining, if it bears the wit and humor with which her lectures are filled, the humor with the good old Stoddard flavor.

Miss Hudson writes stories with an Irish setting and under the nom de plume of Sheila O'Neil. She also signs her poems with that name and continues to please the editors of the "Sunset". So thoroughly has she done so with her last story that they have asked for a second one dealing with the same characters.

Charles Bell Emerson, author of numerous short stories, is an official "answers man" on the staff of the "Adventure" magazine, covering the West Indies and Panama. He is a product of Boston who spent many years in the island possessions as a government engineer. His little rustic cabin, filled with pictures and curios, is not more than half a mile from the hillside studio of Ruth Comfort Mitchell.

Wilbur Hall has recently purchased a fifteen acre mountain home and christened it "Hidden Farm". He is the acknowledged wit of the colony, the superior *par excellence* in "pointing the jest and winging the shaft" in many a satirical paragraph.

Laura Bell Everett sends us from Berkeley her usual charming word of sunny California, where we hope soon to be for a week or two:

It is a day long looked forward to by the California Writers' Club when Jessie Rittenhouse is the guest of honor beside the beloved Laureate of California, Ina Coolbrith. The poet Charles Keeler, president of the club, who was one of the founders and for years the secretary of the Poetry Society of America, was toastmaster. Mrs. Anna K.

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Spero, poet and chairman of the poetry section of the club, announced that the section, sponsored by Miss Coolbrith, had become affiliated with the Poetry Society of America. George Sterling read his ballad, "The Gray Man". Dr. Mary McKibben-Harper of the Chicago Bookfellows, who is on the coast in the interests of the Dickens Foundation; Mrs. Fanny Hodges Newman of San Diego, who came half a thousand miles for the meeting; Mrs. Ednah Aiken of Los Altos, whose novel, "If Today Be Sweet", was recently published; Henry Meade Bland, poet of San Jose and lifelong friend of Edwin Markham, each spoke. Then Harry Noyes Pratt, editor of "The Overland", introduced a number of visiting writers and poets, among them Mrs. Ellen Coit Elliott, poet of Palo Alto, and David Churchill of New York. The reading of her unpublished poem, "The Dying Bedouin Chief", by Ina Coolbrith, the friend of Bret Harte, was an event of the evening. The hopeful tendencies of the present widespread interest in poetry reminded Miss Rittenhouse, by contrast, of the early days of the Poetry Society, when the members met behind closed doors to avoid the ridicule heaped on "long haired poets". She held her listeners in thrall, and at their demand gave some of her own poems.

It is spring in California. All the out of door is poetry. The outlook through prisoning material walls must be through the windows of art, and of the arts poetry is the one that is available to all. We cannot carry art galleries and symphony concerts, however dearly we may love them, to the uttermost parts of the earth, but the tiny volume of poems — that may give us an outlook where factories and traffic roar.

Let every city hold its poets' dinner, for the day is gone when one need be ashamed to be a poet.

George Randolph Chester, one of our best known short story writers, died recently. He came to short story writing, like so many others, through journalism, beginning his newspaper work, as a matter of fact, on the Detroit "News". Mr. Chester's "Get-Rick-Quick-Wallingford" stories are classics in that type of American business fiction. Many a struggling author has modeled and will model his success stories on this formula, which, in the hands of Mr. Chester, was thoroughly charming and no formula at all. Martha Foote Crow, too, died recently. She was a woman who loved poetry dearly, and who loved children and young people. She was most kind to us when we were young and trying to write poetry. Her anthologies and her "The American Country Girl" are well known — and she moved through a most useful life to a singularly sweet old age. Some of her poems were lovely in a quiet lyrical way.

The first night of George Kaufman and Marc Connelly's "Beggar on Horseback" was a thing of surprise. The audience jumped and gurgled with delight as newsboys rushed down the aisles or phonographs shouted out from the balconies. The house was completely packed. To cries of "Author! Author!" there was no response, although right ahead of us sat Deems Taylor. We ourself wanted to give vent to the cry, "Composer! Composer!", for the score he has written for this unusual satire is exquisite. The first night of a motion picture now, William A. Brady tells us, reminds him of an opera first night years ago. The lobbies and often the streets are crowded with people, eager to glimpse the passing motion picture stars. How strange it must be to see your own first night! At "Yolanda" we watched Marion Davies, who seemed most unconcerned, perhaps a trifle excited, shaking her yellow bobbed hair which seemed fluffier than usual, and dressed (according to our own eyes, our fashion editor was not there) in silver, wearing orchids. Near us were Bebe Daniels, Sidney Olcott, and Elliot Dexter. At "America" Louis Wolheim sat next us, and did not seem to shrink from his villainies, exposed before him on the screen. We saw Richard Barthelmess chatting with S. Jay Kaufman, William A.

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Brady chatting with Charles Cochran, Morris Gest chatting with ourself, and Mr. and Mrs. Zukor chatting with each other. We must say that Mr. Valentino, whom we saw in the studio the other day playing "Monsieur Beaucaire", makes a handsome figure in silver wig and silver costume. Mr. Tarkington could scarcely have been luckier in his hero for the screen version of what many people consider his masterpiece.

It is a rather tremendous job to create a personality for so great a theatre as the Hippodrome in New York City. Yet, since its rebuilding by the B. F. Keith forces, it has taken on a most genial aspect of its own. We find ourself drifting to the great playhouse over and over. We have always enjoyed vaudeville. More especially, we have enjoyed animal and acrobatic acts — and it is on these, and the spectacular revue, that the huge Hippodrome must depend for its attraction. We have seldom been so amused as we were recently by Clyde Cook, and Marcelle and his seal are positively amazing. The remaking of the theatre itself has resulted in the creation of a luxurious, comfortable playhouse, where it is really possible to feel at home. "Toy Town", built in the basement, is enchanting, with its tiny shops, its animals, its midgets to guard and guide. We were particularly fascinated, upon being led into the stables, by a baby kangaroo, born only a few days before, still in its mother's pouch, poking its young head out curiously to see the new world. Here is a vaudeville home a visit to which will form part of any week's visit to town — particularly on Sunday night. It is going to furnish us with much amusement for years to come, we trust.

Again the child familiar goes through the bookshelves and we find him writing the following in Walter de la Mare's "Come Hither". It isn't that he doesn't like the book. He does; but he likes sleep very much better than any book these days.

Sometimes when it is bedtime,
My mother comes to me,
She takes me from my warm bed,
And sits me on her knee.

And it is very pleasant
To hear her golden voice,
Reading bedtime stories
According to my choice.

And when she reads me poems,
The kind that I like best—
The music of them lulls me
Quite gently to my rest.

Now, often when I'm wakeful
I count a million sheep —
But poems are far, far better
For putting boys to sleep!

In "Treasure Island" he wrote, for some reason not quite plain:

I'd like to be a parrot
All clad in shiny green,
Then I could sit all day and think
With stops for meals between.

Whenever I start talking,
Mamma says, "Hush, my dear.
A child should be quite quiet,
There's much for him to hear!"

But if I were a parrot
With a splendid yellow beak,
They'd actually bribe me
To ope my mouth and speak!

Minton, Balch and Company, the young and aspiring firm, offshoot of Scribner's and Putnam's, announce four books on their spring list: a new novel by Robert Gordon Anderson, a new book by Ossendowski's collaborator, a new collection of Richard Connell's short stories, and a first novel by Ferdinand Berthoud. All luck to them — our fiery pen awaits the published product.

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